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NEW STATESMAN

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Carter, NATO and Cyprus

The latest NATO declarations on the Cyprus question provide almost a *locus classicus* of how not to conduct a foreign policy. They display just that combination of strategic special pleading and political naïvete which led to the Cyprus catastrophe in the first place. What the NATO ministers are saying in effect is that Turkey should not be inconvenienced at all for her unauthorised use of American weapons in the 1974 invasion, and should be allowed to annex as much of the island as she wishes without any apparent demurral from the West. This, of course, because she is an ally, and because of the strategic importance of the Bosphorus. Exactly this kind of approach was demonstrated by NATO leaders when they excused seven years of repulsive military dictatorship in Athens – a dictatorship culminating in the very aggression against Cyprus which made the Turkish invasion inevitable. Only then, of course, the strategic importance of Piraeus harbour to the Sixth Fleet was being invoked. (One wonders why it is not being invoked now.)

Because Dr Kissinger had deceived Congress so thoroughly over the 1974 events, and because his policy in the area achieved the remarkable triple feat of alienating Greeks, Turks and Cypriots all at the same time, the Cyprus issue became something of a test case in the fight for open government in foreign policy. That, and not the activism of the 'Greek lobby', is the reason for the tenacity of certain Senators in upholding the embargo on arms to Turkey which NATO has said should be removed. One of the advantages of the Carter policy to date has been its reluctance to excuse piratical behaviour on the grounds that it is conducted by 'allies'. The condemnation of Israel's use of cluster bombs has been a case in point. Now Carter is contradicting this policy as it applies to Cyprus, in order to appease its powerful foes in the military and defence establishments. It has been found a mistake in the past to treat Cyprus as if it was uninhabited; it will be found so again.

NATO has called for a relaxation of pressure on Turkey just at a time when her pretexts for occupying the island are dissolving. There are increasing signs of Turkish-Cypriot discontent with the forces of the 'peace-keeping' contingent, illustrated forcibly by large demonstrations in Turkish Nicosia on May Day, when slogans against partition and colonisation were raised. Turkey still stands condemned at the United Nations for its policy towards Cyprus, and, although the report has not been published, at the European Commission on Human Rights as well. Negotiations between Turkey and the EEC are also impeded by the issue. But the hope of a settlement is being frustrated by the very group of intransigent military men whose bluff NATO is so eager not to call.

The triangle which is formed by Ankara, Athens and Nicosia will not cease to be a source of instability until there is a just political settlement in Cyprus. It is therefore absurdly short-sighted of the West to use one aspect of that instability – the unrest among Turkish generals – as an excuse to postpone a policy which could bring a settlement closer. The scare-mongering about Russian influence in Turkey just will not wash. Not only is the Turkish high command the most resolutely anti-Communist in NATO, but opportunities for Russian meddling in the area multiply precisely because Cyprus is such a source of division.

It might have been hoped that NATO, two of whose armies participated in the dismemberment of Cyprus, would accept some responsibility. But apparently its sole concern is to inter the issue as swiftly as possible, to get Turkey off the hook and to act as if strategy and politics existed on different planes. This stance, which involves conceding the right of one country to acquire the territory of another by force, is wrong in principle and foolhardy in practice. A Labour government should have no part in it.

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Notes on Politics and Power

Labour Democracy Out-manoeuvred

Patrick Wintour writes: 'The NEC shall put down at next year's annual conference all the amendments to the constitution necessary to provide automatic reselection in the way and in the sense that the sponsors of these 60-odd resolutions want. I do not think that there is the slightest chance of the executive reneging on that undertaking.' With these words Ian Mikardo persuaded last year's Labour Party conference (and particularly the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy who had organised these resolutions) that full reselection of MPs in the way CLPD prescribed would be put to conference this year.

Anyone who followed the Labour establishment's procedural delays and general uneasiness over greater accountability of MPs will be less than astonished to learn that the proposals currently before the NEC for presentation to conference do not in fact satisfy the sponsors of the resolutions. Yet in an interview in *Labour Weekly* late last year Mikardo advised that the gist of the resolutions was so clear that it was merely an administrative matter of Transport House putting them into the form of an amendment to the party's constitution. Since then the Organisation Committee voted 5-4, on the chairman's casting vote, to look at the whole question of automatic reselection, even though the principle had been accepted at the 1976 conference.

The Organisation Committee's working party eventually voted 9-4 in favour of a compromise originally championed by Joe Ashton. Between 18 and 36 months into a parliament's life, a constituency party would gather to decide if their sitting MP must be sent through a full reselection procedure. The CLPD claim that this scheme effectively turns the meeting into a confidence vote for the MP, thereby personalising the issues and doing little to diminish the prospect of unpleasant publicity and avoidable acrimony. The CLPD do not want any MP to receive such favourable treatment, but instead to face automatically reselection in competition with a shortlist of other candidates. Job security might be reduced but so would the outbreaks of amnesia MPs have over conference and constituency resolutions. Mikardo comes back with two points. First, his system does not compel a constituency party to go through reselection of an MP they are happy with. Secondly the CLPD's single meeting does not give a sponsoring union fair warning that their man is about to be given the sack or the opportunity for a union to find a different nominee.

The CLPD held a little conference over the weekend in Oxford, 'in a mood of extreme dissatisfaction', according to the organiser. They are not yet clear, however, whether they have been totally outmanoeuvred. The intricacies of the Labour Party constitution are such that the CLPD are unsure, assuming that the NEC put the report before conference unaltered, whether they can again advance their original proposals as an alternative to those of the NEC or whether conference can only accept or reject the NEC's ideas. If the latter the CLPD may have to swallow the compromise rather than watch the whole five year try at democratisation disappear into the recesses of Transport House once more.

Child Pornography

Ian Mikardo writes: Now that the Child Protection Bill has been amended and improved significantly in the House of Lords, it is possible to examine it calmly and to disentangle the facts from the ill-informed hysteria which followed my initial objection to it. The intention of the Bill is a sensible one – to protect children from exploitation and harm by pornographers. However, the hysteria stirred up by some newspapers and some radio and television commentators gave a misleading impression of the extent of the abuses which the Bill seeks to curtail. Several assumptions were made which have since been shown to be totally false: that child pornography is widespread in Great Britain and growing fast; that the present law can't cope with it; that the Bill as drafted and presented was an effective way of dealing with the 'problem'; and that my own objection to the Bill in the House destroyed any chance of it becoming law.

The Minister of State at the Home Office has told us of the wide-ranging enquiries which the Home Office made in order to determine the incidence of child pornography. This covered the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Metropolitan Police, a number of Chief Constables, and some other authorities. The consensus which emerged was that 'no evidence has been produced that such practices are widespread, or that they are growing'. Lord Wigoder, a leading Liberal spokesman and a distinguished lawyer, reinforced this view: 'I would not want it to be thought that in the year 1978 a vast area of abuse of children for sexual purposes had suddenly been discovered, having been unknown to the law in past years. It simply is not so.'

The Bill as drafted adds very little to the ability of the present law to deal with child pornographers. The Minister of State has told us that 'for practical purposes the present law is capable of dealing with such cases as arise of children being used for pornographic purposes'.

The drafting of the Bill was seriously defective. Before it was amended, its wording was so loose that it could have made a criminal offence out of a mother taking a snapshot of her unclothed child of the sort that is found in every family album.

On 14 April I objected to the Bill passing through the Commons without any discussion and without any possibility of improving it by amendments. Ten minutes later I told the newspapers that I expected it to complete the Commons' stages within a week. Most of them, and some MPs interviewed on radio and television, chose not to believe me: they asserted unequivocally that 'the Bill is in the gutter', 'the Bill has suffered a mortal blow', 'the Bill is dead'. Three days later it passed through all its stages in the Commons, and by a revised procedure has now been properly examined in the Lords. Not one of the false prophets, as far as I know, confessed to his error.

There is a good chance now that the House of Commons will take a fresh look at our rather silly procedures for dealing with Private Members' Bills. Their most common effect at present is that the Bills which are seriously discussed are never passed, while most of those which are passed get on to the Statute Book without any serious discussion. The Mother of Parliaments is surely capable of doing better.

Nationalist Decay

Brian Wilson writes: Next Tuesday evening at the Larkhall Miners' welfare, a Grovette (a miner's scarf) will be placed round the neck of Mr George Robertson, Labour Party candidate in the Hamilton by-election. In accordance with tradition, he is then expected to wear the object throughout polling day, at the end of which he is likely to be declared MP for the constituency. The Hamilton area is steeped in Labour history: only once has the Grovette failed: that was in 1967 when Mrs Winifred Ewing won the seat for the SNP.

Prior to Mrs Ewing's triumph, the Hamilton constituency had had only two MPs since it was formed in 1918. Both, of course, were Labour. In 1970 the voters of Hamilton reverted to habit and elected Mr Alex Wilson, who was sponsored by the National Union of Mineworkers, with a thumping majority. In the 1974 elections the Tory vote disintegrated to the advantage of the SNP. When the by-election was made necessary by Mr Wilson's death, it was generally accepted that the Nationalists could not have been presented with a better opportunity. It was a seat they had won before, and their candidate – the formidable Mrs Margo Macdonald – was already waiting in the wings. She needed only a 4.3 per cent swing to take the seat. In the intervening weeks, this popular in-

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terpretation has changed, almost beyond belief. Labour workers are talking confidently about an increased majority. Mrs Macdonald claims forlornly that she is 'catching up'. But there have been remarkably few signs of SNP activity in Hamilton.

Most astonishing of all, the most recent of the hitherto reliable opinion polls published by the *Glasgow Herald* gave Labour a 23 per cent lead over both the SNP and the Tories. Labour officials say privately that their canvassing returns in Hamilton bear this out. They resist the temptation to trumpet this conclusion for fear of promoting apathy. The change in atmosphere since the Garscadden by-election, just six weeks ago, is extraordinary.

The SNP leadership should be grateful to Mr Callaghan for fixing the by-election date three days after their annual conference ends, rather than three days before it begins. But in private, if not in public, delegates will be addressing themselves to the question that defies psephological analysis: why has the SNP fall from grace been so dramatic? An incident from Garscadden might point to the answer. Provost Gordon Murray, SNP group leader on Strathclyde Regional Council, told an election meeting that Westminster was depriving the Scots of a dual carriageway along busy Loch Lomondside. A lady meekly protested that she liked Loch Lomonside the way it is. Quick as a flash, Provost Murray assured her that he would be the last person to interfere with Scotland's scenery. What was really required was a two-tier traffic system along by Loch Lomond – one for cars and one for heavy vehicles.

There comes a point at which trying to please all the people all of the time becomes counter-productive. The SNP may have reached that point.

Soviet Unions

Roger Boyes writes:

The Labour Party has never been bashful about denouncing the oppression of workers in South America, South Africa and Iran. The neutered trades unions in Chile and Argentina, for instance, have been officially condemned by Labour and have indeed become something of a rallying point for members from all sections of the party.

Yet mention of the Russian Association of Free Trade Unions – the country's first attempt to form an independent union – draws little more than embarrassed shrugs from the party's stalwarts. Mr Eric Heffer, champion of the 200 dissident unionists, is finding it difficult to extract even a simple statement of support from his party colleagues. He has called on the International Sub-Committee of the National Executive to declare support for AFTU in a formal resolution but the Committee has decided to defer the vote for a month, pending an official Soviet explanation in reply to a letter from Len Murray.

It is not difficult to imagine the tone of the Soviet explanation: 'Dear Brother Murray, I can assure you there is no such "free" trade union in the USSR. The workers you refer to amount to no more than a handful of renegades. Many of them have broken Soviet law, others are intent on not working. We must not allow such people to interfere with our traditionally good relations. By the way, what is the British unemployment figure now? . . . '

There are signs that individual unions are at least debating the rights and wrongs of supporting an independent Soviet trade union. The AUEW has even sent a letter to Leonid Brezhnev expressing concern at the reported arrest of some of the dissident unionists. But Labour's National Executive is a tougher nut. Crudely speaking, a possible conflict between pro-Soviet and pro-AFTU factions could well be resolved at the expense of the Russian dissidents.

The gaps in Soviet labour legislation are revealing. It is not actually forbidden to strike, for instance, but neither is the right to do so legally recognised. Strikers, such as those in the Riga dockyards in 1976, automatically open themselves up to prosecution under criminal statutes governing anti-Soviet agitation. More often than not though, strikes – those that have become known to Western correspondents – are dealt with under less overtly political laws, like 'hooliganism'.

AFTU's campaign however is geared less to securing additional rights for workers than to ensuring that the existing rights are honoured by Party officials in management and planning. The official unions have failed to do this. They are essentially a supportive mechanism, diffusing shop floor conflict and ensuring, through a system of incentives, that work norms are achieved.

AFTU then, was born out of frustration. Workers complaints, the dissidents argue, are only to be acted upon if they happen to fit in with the ambitions of a section of management. Strike action too brings results but only after the leaders are jailed. The backgrounds of the dissident unionists tell much about the nature of their movement. Its founder, Vladimir Klebanov, recently sent to prison from a mental hospital where he was under 'observation', was a pithead shift supervisor until he lost his job after complaining about his mens' working conditions. The miners, he said, often had to work 12-hour days instead of the legally required six-hour shifts, to fulfil artificially high production targets. Another jailed member of the group is Valentin Poplavsky who worked as a supervisor of the housing maintenance department of a factory in Klimovsk, near Moscow. He was dismissed for refusing to enter a reprimand in the labour book of a woman who protested at the misuse of factory funds by management to finance drinking parties. The other members of the group, who include construction workers, dockers, welders, a rat catcher and a waitress have similar stories.

Under the Soviet 'parasitism' law – originally designed to control the activities of tramps and gypsies – any person who is unemployed for more than four months in a year is liable to two years' imprisonment. The Soviet worker in fact has not only the right to work, but also a positive obligation to do so. All of the AFTU members are finding it difficult to survive: there is no unemployment benefit in the Soviet Union and they are living primarily on loans from relatives. Unlike the middle class dissidents, many of whom retain useful contacts in the academic world as well as in the West, the AFTU group is isolated and will almost certainly collapse without concerted support from outside the Soviet Union.

Some British unionists and at least one Labour MP have argued privately against support of the workers on the grounds that they constitute a complainants' association rather than a union. If international pressure secured redress for the dissidents, they claim, AFTU could well fall apart and the West would end up looking foolish. But AFTU's complaints are rooted in the inadequacy of the official unions. The group wants reform, reform which will guarantee a fool-proof complaints procedure, which will safeguard legally anchored rights from the petty corruption of Party officials.

Arguably, the reactionary tone of Solzhenitsyn's 'Letter to the Leaders of the USSR' may have reinforced the feeling that dissidents were much disgruntled members of the right-wing intelligentsia. Indeed Solzhenitsyn's 'Letter' prompted some on the West European Left to renounce all Russian dissidents and avoid unpleasant discussion about the suppression of their works. But the AFTU members would shy away even from the label of 'dissident'. They are still overwhelmingly Socialist, not counter-revolutionaries or would-be emigrants. Just workers trying to get a fair deal. Even the French and Italian Communist Parties seem to have acknowledged this and have appealed on behalf of the free trade union. The Labour Party meanwhile waits for an official explanation from Moscow.

Roger Boyes is on the staff of the Financial Times.

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Bruce Page: The rich rewards of socialist electronics

As this issue of the NEW STATESMAN goes on sale, the Cabinet will be making – probably successfully – its second attempt to resolve one of the most remarkable issues that its industrial policy has yet thrown up. Whichever way the decision goes, it will crucially affect the debate about how the mixed economy should be run.

Briefly, the National Enterprise Board wants to set up a joint company with a group of Anglo-American entrepreneurs, the aim of which will be to establish a British presence in the international market for microprocessors. Scarcely anyone familiar with the evidence doubts that microprocessors – minute 'chips' of electronic circuitry, each containing the power of a fair-sized computer – will produce within a very few years a transforming effect on manufacturing industry. Scarcely anyone concerned with industrial policy doubts that a British intervention in the market is urgently required.

What has caused some heart-searching is the method the NEB has chosen. The capital risk, running to some £20-30 million, will be borne by public funds. But the private entrepreneurs concerned – although they will not put up any significant part of the money – will receive a substantial slice of the shareholding for themselves. Assuming the venture is even moderately successful, they will all become millionaires.

When the scheme reached Cabinet last Thursday, there was more than one Minister – including Tony Benn, the original begetter of the NEB – who had difficulty seeing how such massive enrichment of private individuals could be fitted into the concept of a socialist industrial policy.

The ethical anxieties of the Left have been assuaged, if not quite expunged, by consideration of the benefits which may be expected in employment and in export trade. (There will be 4,000 jobs created immediately, and many more by 'spin-off' effect, given success.) But even if the scheme passes Cabinet at its second attempt, it must survive hostility from the Right which is likely to be more enduring, and which springs from less elevated motivations.

Private corporate capital, personified by Sir Arnold Weinstock and GEC, has been trembling for some time on the brink of this particular investment decision. Microprocessors offer profit, but they also offer risk. And, whatever the fine words from Aims of Industry, the truth is that British capitalism doesn't much care for risk: preferring to be guided by Andrew Carnegie's maxim that 'pioneerin' don't pay'.

So long as no-one else in the country is able to do any pioneerin', the position is reasonably fireproof. (Should some new-fangled device turn out successfully, then one can usually buy the technology from more venturesome foreign concerns: private capital, after all, isn't responsible for the balance of payments.) But the situation will be very much altered if Britain's pensive merchant adventurers are going to be regularly shouldered aside by the buccaneers of public enterprise: the consequence, indeed, might be to make pioneering the only way to stay in business. It is reported that Weinstock is not pleased with the latest form of state intervention in industry.

Few if any industries have grown at the breathtaking pace regarded as normal with microprocessors. (And there are few obvious limits to the possible uses of computers which cost next to nothing and take up next to no space. One estimate holds that within a few years 60 per cent of the value of a car will be in its electronics: others, that equipment based on microprocessors will take over most of the routine paper-work in offices.) Until now, the affair has been one of almost total American dominion: small electronics firms from 'Silicon Valley' in California leap-frogging over their rivals by doubling or quadrupling the calculating-power which can be packed into a sliver of artificial gemstone. The process has been classically entrepreneurial: each new step occurring when a group of people with a new idea leave one of the established concerns and set up an outfit of their own.

Commercial freedom

Until very recently, big British electronics firms like GEC have been content to import microprocessors as and when needed. On the whole, the civil servants of the Department of Industry have gone along with the view that it would be costly, and futile to try and catch up on the US lead.

The origin, and the greater part of the details, of the NEB's initiative are shrouded in considerable secrecy. But there is no doubt that its basic principle is to win back for British application the services of some half-dozen British expatriates who left for 'Silicon Valley' precisely because of the lack of any commercial microprocessor industry in this country. Within the American industry, it is common ground that people only leave an established concern in return for some degree of equity shareholding in the new one: the NEB has decided to accommodate this principle.

The identity of the handful of engineers and executives involved is, so far, a fairly closely-guarded secret. But one version holds that they are a group who came together themselves and tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain venture capital support from GEC and other established concerns in the British electronics industry. Essentially their plan is to establish an entirely new plant in Britain – sited in an area of high unemployment – to build a new range of microprocessors which will represent a large step forward in the 'state of the art'. (In the mind-boggling language of the trade, the standard involved will be a '16 K random access memory', which is roughly double the power of present microprocessors.

Public investment, through the NEB, will probably run to £20-30 million. The 'entrepreneurial group', apparently, will not put up any significant amount of money, but will be given an equity stake in the business, which will rise to some 30 per cent if the concern is successful. The likelihood is that most will be paid in dollars, and some will presumably retain expatriate status. 'It's not something I would recommend for the shoe industry,' says a union official who has looked at the deal.

Naturally, a fairly important question is whether or not the NEB has chosen the right people: certainly the Board's officials are aware that the consequences of getting it wrong could be explosive. The example of Geoffrey Cross, the British-born but American-domiciled executive who was brought in to run Britain's publicly-controlled big-computer firm, ICL, is not entirely happy. Cross was given an equity stake in ICL, which he sold out after his unexpectedly early departure at very considerable profit to himself.

The continuing – though so far secret – political debate over the NEB's new venture arises from the guidelines under which the Board operates. These say that it should have a large measure of commercial and financial freedom, but must consult the Secretary of State for Industry (Eric Varley) when considering any investment which involves more than £10 million, or which raises new issues of public policy.

The proposals which were discussed in Cabinet last week actually contained three options: the others being to deal with microprocessor manufacture in Britain either by bringing in an established foreign concern, or by encouraging a partnership deal between a foreign firm and one of the major British electronics groups. Traditional civil service opinion seems to have favoured the two latter options, though the NEB in fact dislikes both of them.

In last week's Cabinet meeting, the so-called 'green field option' encountered resistance from Ministers who thought that it would set a dangerous, perhaps unhandleable precedent for the public service. Would it mean that managers and executives in State-backed enterprises generally would demand, and receive, lucrative shareholdings in the concerns they were supposed to run? What would stop the directors of firms like the British National Oil Corporation from demanding similar privileges? What would be the psychological effect of establishing such a sharply discontinuous system of rewards?

Most of these objections have been met by claims about the unique character of the microprocessor industry, and about the crucial need to bring back particular skills to Britain at a moment when investment decisions must be made which could change the whole development of manufacturing industry. The deal, in fact, has been presented as a 'one-off' proposition – which in a certain sense it obviously is. But if it succeeds, and creates Britain's first group of millionaires-by-public-investment, the consequences will surely not stop there.

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Mike Thomas: Kiss of Life Reform for the House of Commons

Despite all the brickbats, Parliament and individual MPs (as opposed to politicians in general) still command a positive response from the electorate, if the opinion polls are to be believed. Broadcasting live the most ritually partisan of all parliamentary proceedings – Prime Minister's Question Time – may have diminished that somewhat, but MPs are still believed to have influence in matters of policy as well as over individual grievances. Parliament is still accorded some residual and supervisory responsibility for running the country, even if Jack Jones is top of the 'most powerful man in the country' chart.

Yet many commentators, and MPs themselves, take the view that Parliament, while still an important shop window for the party political dogfight, is at the nadir of its practical influence, doing little more than ratifying the decisions of the corporate state. According to this school, individual membership of the House of Commons is of no account, save as a qualification for joining the political executive.

And that in itself is being progressively neutered by Europe, devolution, pressure groups and the general unwillingness of Britain to be governed at all.

Each glimmer of change – a government regularly defeated but surviving in a hung parliament, the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries refusing to accept that for BSC to forecast a loss of £440 millions is the same as forecasting a loss of £95-£255 millions and subpoenaing papers to prove it, the Labour Party Conference voting to abolish the House of Lords – provokes learned articles on parliamentary reform. But they are mostly written with the pessimistic detachment of men observing a series of attempts to artificially respirate what they know to be a corpse.

Yet all the evidence is that the corpse really is capable of being brought back to life after all. Increasingly, backbench MPs are not prepared to continue to play the game, which the public long ago tired of anyway, of turning every issue into a party political charade. A game which allows the Government of the day to sustain through party loyalty and discipline the most trivial prejudice of its most lowly minister; and which allows the Opposition never to have to take responsibility for anything as it rests safe in the knowledge that it will always lose the vote and thence be able to blame the Government.

A hung parliament has helped in that the Government has had to learn to lose on occasion with good grace. And by what is surely more than a coincidence, the rise of Scottish Nationalism may well turn out to provoke as its most lasting by-product, a redress of the balance of constitutional power in Parliament's favour comparable to the dramatic tilt in the opposite direction provoked by Irish obstructionism in the late nineteenth century. For it is in that period that the root of the executive supremacy which bedevils many of Parliament's existing procedures is to be found.

Whatever the reason, there are dear signs of stirring in the Parliamentary breast. The Commons Select Committee on Procedure is expected to report soon and is thought to be applying itself to some major enhancing of the power of backbenchers. The Conservatives would actually like to involve Parliament in the critical area of pay policy, by using a Select Committee to determine the overall size of wage settlements that can be afforded by the nation in any year. The Labour Party published last week the report of a study group on Parliamentary Reform and backbench MPs on both sides of the House appear less and less prepared to put up with Parliament as it is.

The nature of the problem is well known. So apparently necessary has it become for government to consult and bargain with the pressure groups, both on major planks of policy and on the most extensive range of detailed matters, that Parliament is constantly faced with 'fait accomplis'. In matters of legislation and of executive decision the political majority is wheeled out to rubber stamp the compromises of the corporate state. Parliament is often even kept in ignorance of the alternative courses of action considered in the 'horse trading' of interest groups with each other and the executive. This will usually have been conducted in an atmosphere of secrecy which is preserved within the government by the doctrine of collective responsibility and in the interest groups by enjoinders not to encourage Parliament to upset the carefully stitched together compromise package eventually presented for fear one change will undo a carefully sewn up garment.

> 'Parliament is often kept in ignorance of the 'horse trading' of interest groups'

Worse still, on all but the most important issues, the sometimes terrifying lack of understanding of the work of Parliament and the political system by both sides of industry (and their marked preference for dealing with ministers and civil servants out of the public eye) can sometimes lead to their acceptance in silence of a proposal which meets only their barest requirements, its major elements and most intimate details being dictated by a minister (or more likely his civil servants) and wished upon them by vague talk of 'difficulties' in getting any other set of proposals through Parliament. The same minister will then appear in standing committee defending such a measure against all amendment, while privately implying to backbench colleagues in his own party that he would love to accept their proposals for changes and improvement but to do so would upset the interest groups he has consulted and undo firm promises he has made to them.

Needless to say, this is not the attitude to Parliament of all or even a majority of ministers of this or any other government. But it will be a familiar description of the British political process at its regular worst to many MPs, trade unionists and industrialists.

Parliament itself must accept a large measure of the responsibility for this state of affairs. Governments, in the nature of things, are usually elected with only the most generalised of manifestos. But there will be some general understanding on major issues, of the policies which should be given high priority and of the decisions which their parliamentary party will not stomach.

Between these two boundaries lies vast territory over which the government may range. Internal democracy within the parliamentary parties is of a fairly rudimentary kind. In practice, backbenchers are faced constantly with a lack of resources, information and sheer time. They are usually driven at the end of the day to deciding the issue not on its merits, but on the grounds of whether it really is a serious enough matter to be worth the opprobrium of defying the party whips (although it is often hard to see what party political content some decisions actually have).

It is not, of course, in principle wrong that loyalty to front bench colleagues and party should be in MPs' mind. But it is not right, or good for parliamentary democracy, that the loyalty should be made to figure so prominently on almost every issue or that our parliamentary procedures should be so overwhelmingly designed to revolve around the party political axis, often at the expense of proper scrutiny of the executive, of legislation and of political patronage.

In the midst of all this has grown up the Select Committee in its post-war form. It was everyone's white hope for change but hasn't fulfilled its promise. Why?

Firstly, because select committees, on the

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whole, have accepted a post-hoc scrutinising role, thus rarely homing in on current policy-making. Secondly, because select committees have always had an air of *ad hocery* about them. Until very recently, they were disbanded annually and even now they only survive the length of a parliament.

Thirdly, because this uncertainty of existence has reflected itself in the failure to establish proper, expert staffs rather than borrowed advisors. And fourthly, because there is a miserly lack of resources. Add to this the failure to establish committees to 'shadow' each government department and the generally low political priority attached to the committees, and you have some measure of the failure of select committees to live up to their expectations. It is our failure to separate the executive and the legislature as the Americans do that is the critical factor. It may be the fatal inhibitor to any attempts to develop machinery whereby Parliament can really scrutinise both the actions of the executive and proposed legislation.

It is certainly the case that a major determinant of Parliament's current weakness is the growth of the disciplined party system and the confusion of role of the backbench government party MP between sustainer and scrutiniser of the executive. It is a weakness that has been extensively exploited by the front benches of both major parties. While Parliament could in theory take these matters in hand because backbenchers are always in a majority in the House of Commons, in practice it is extraordinarily difficult. The government dominates the organisation of the House and its business. Only they can put down motions in the sure knowledge that they will be considered. And they effectively decide what Select Committees there will be, what powers they shall have and who shall serve on them. The Treasury appears to decide what financial and staff resources will be made available.

Despite all this, there are some encouraging signs that backbenchers are genuinely determined to take back some of the power that has been sapped away and that a significant number of frontbenchers of both major parties are sufficiently convinced that the present situation, while congenial and convenient, has so many drawbacks for the good of the parliamentary system that it cannot be allowed to continue unchanged.

Those who hold the view that Parliament is about translating the party or ministerial will unaltered into law, or opposing it root and branch depending where you're sitting at the time, steadily diminish in numbers. But there are still enough of them around to make the fight for change a real knock 'em and drag 'em out affair, But the fight is coming and the will for change is there. It should centre around four main issues.

First, establishing a real and detailed scrutiny of the executive through departmental select committees. This is recommended in the Labour Party Study Group Report, may well be recommended by the Procedure Committee and is desperately needed. It will pose all sorts of problems. Will the committees include frontbenchers as well as backbenchers? What power of information will they need? Will they hamper ministerial capacity to make policy and progress affairs? What level of staffing should be provided – will it amount to a 'shadow civil service'? Will the committees tend (contrary to present select committee practice) to operate on party lines and will this reduce their effectiveness as ministers play the party card? I am convinced that departmental select committees, developing their expertise, able to subpoena papers and question ministers, civil servants and interest groups systematically for hours at a time, would return substantial effective scrutiny powers to Parliament, which at present are hardly available (except perhaps through the work of the Expenditure Committee) and which would directly improve the quality of government.

The second objective to be fought for is a dramatic improvement in parliamentary scrutiny of legislation. The largely ritual quadrilles of many of our current standing committee proceedings (incorporating for the backbench participant an almost insupportable level of sheer tedium) are a grotesquely inadequate method of scrutiny.

The Select Committee on Nationalised Industries is currently giving a series of pre-legislative hearings to those concerned with the draft Bill to reorganise the electricity industry – held up because of Liberal opposition and now published as a White Paper. It has already become clear in the course of those hearings that taking evidence on a bill from interested parties in public has some very great advantages for Parliament. It is immediately clear who thinks what about the bill and its provisions. The process of 'horse trading' in Whitehall where, whatever compromise is arrived at, everyone concerned then has a vested interest in defending it, is broken down. Those affected by the bill can put their case directly and all members of the committee considering the bill (assuming that pre-legislative hearings in select committee format were to become a regular pre-cursor of standing committee proceedings), could hear its virtues and vices discussed openly before they come to consider it line by line. Obviously the process could not be allowed to delay legislation forever, but in the case of legislation affecting a large number of groups or of a highly contentious nature, it would surely be justifiable for Parliament to take somewhat longer to consider a bill than it would on a matter of less importance.

Thirdly, I believe that Parliament must turn its attention to the appointments made by ministers, which now total several thousands. These should be subject to Parliamentary scrutiny and to direct affirmation by Parliament. For the most important appointments – for example, the heads of nationalised industries – it should be possible for the minister's nominee to be examined by a select committee which would then report to the House before the appointment is confirmed. Similarly, a major appointee, whom a minister wished to dismiss before the end of an agreed term of office, would have the right to appeal to Parliament. Lastly, backbenchers need to insist that management of the functioning and resources of Parliament ought not to be left to the frontbenchers.

The Labour Party's new proposals go a long way to meet the requirements of reform. However, they appear to have been over-influenced by three questionable assumptions.

First, that the Labour Government's legislative problems in the current Parliament are more to do with parliamentary procedures than with its recent lack of an overall majority, combined with the occasional defection from its own ranks.

Second, that the Parliamentary Labour Party's desire 'to help the executive push its policies through against opposition in Parliament, against outside and vested interests and maybe against the opposition of the civil service', will be as great if and when the Conservative Party form the executive.

Third, that the reform of Parliament should necessarily involve the strengthening within Parliament of the party political process.

The first two of these assumptions may be the result of no more than a little muddled thinking. The last is a fundamental misconception in principle. It is the constant elevation of every trivial matter to the rhetorical heights of party politics that is the prime cause of Parliament's current weakness. No one will gainsay the importance of party politics and ideology on the main issues of the day, but when applied to every issue, they are the instrument of back bench emasculation and the cause of much public criticism of Parliament and MPs.

I share with Eric Heffer and his colleagues the desire 'to ensure that Parliament (becomes) a place to which the people (can) work for the safeguarding of their democratic rights, the expression of their views and an improvement of their condition through social change.' But if anything is clear, it is that the people do not want that to happen through a further extension of party politics to consideration of every administrative action and piece of legislation proposed. We in the Labour Party will do well to keep that firmly in mind as we pursue the long overdue task of reforming Parliament.

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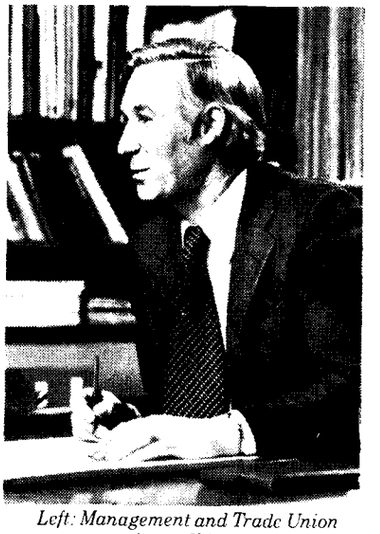
For once, Tony Davies is happy to appear in a headline.



Left: Management and Trade Union representatives talking to a factory supervisor, before undertaking a job evaluation exercise.

At employees' suggestion, the Hartcliffe factory at Bristol included a supermarket – as well as a bank and a Post Office.

Since industrial news today seems to consist mainly of horror stories about strikes, lock-outs, crisis and confrontation, it's understandable that Tony Davies, Personnel Director of Imperial Tobacco, is hardly eager to make the front page.

"I suspect that most of the public has a hopelessly inaccurate picture of British industrial relations – just because it never gets to read about the hard work put in every day, both by management and by unions, to keep companies running productively.

"Imperial Tobacco may be a case in point. We've grown to be a very big business and there's no doubt at all that good internal relations has been a major factor.

"Part of that success, it's fair to claim, has been due to specific advances in policy. Like the Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund, which was a pioneer in its field. And like the early establishment not only of equal pay for men and women, but of joint agreements on equal opportunity.

"But the heart of the matter is in the close working relationship built up over the years with our Trade Unions – through the hard day-to-day work of consultation, bargaining and problem-solving.

"We maintain a continuous dialogue on problems like pay structures, job evaluation, re-equipping and cost effectiveness; and we've found that a joint approach leads to better solutions in all cases.

"Recently, we've been consulting on the changes brought about by the new EEC tax regulations – changes that are going to affect all of us. Once again, by sharing the problems, we believe we'll arrive at the best answers.

"It's not glamorous stuff – either for the manager trying to meet a deadline, or for the shop steward who's trying to represent his members responsibly. But that's what keeps the business ticking – even if it never makes the news."

Tony Davies is one of the 20,000 strong team that makes up Imperial Tobacco, a major employer, taxpayer and investor in Britain's future prosperity.

Imperial Tobacco: people at work

Imperial Tobacco Limited – a member of Imperial Group Limited

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Chancellor Healey in pursuit of the denizens of the tax-avoidance jungle: in particular, Mr Godfrey Bradman (centre)

David Nissan: An Impending Defeat for the Tax-men?

Our editorial last week criticised this year's budget which will increase disparities of wealth. In the same budget, however, the Government are attempting to introduce retrospective legislation to clamp down on the burgeoning practice of tax evasion which is now causing the Exchequer huge losses. Such retrospective legislation would have set a dangerous precedent, but it looks like being defeated in standing committee by a combination of Tories and Liberals, thus inflicting a major defeat on the Inland Revenue as well as the Government. The tax evasion industry will continue to flourish.

Within the next two weeks, 17 Labour MP's, 15 Conservatives, Enoch Powell and John Pardoe, will debate a thorny question raised by one item, clause 26 of the Chancellor's budget. It seeks to change the law affecting users of a very sophisticated income tax avoidance scheme – retrospectively. It will render past claims against tax, valid at the time they were made, invalid. In so doing, the Government will deny those taxpayers appeal to the considerable body of civil law that governs tax matters. Is the state putting itself above the law?

If such a move had been made in any other aspect of the law an immediate outcry would have been provoked. When Sam Silkin declined to enforce Grunwick's rights to a postal service, the National Association for Freedom were quick to challenge him in court, and they won. Yet in this instance, when the letter of the law is abandoned *retrospectively*, scarcely a voice has been raised in protest.

This is surprising, as those affected by this measure are not without influence. In fact some are the most privileged in the country. Most have incomes in excess of £50,000 a year and have managed to sidestep their admittedly heavy obligations to the Revenue. Should they be successful, their take home pay will increase by some 40 per cent. Neither party would defend their claims to be outside the system – the quarrel is over how they should be made to pay up with the rest.

Would-be tax avoiders are served by a highly efficient and profitable industry that has seen massive growth throughout the Seventies. It is dominated by two practitioners, both accountants, Godfrey Bradman and Roy Tucker. Between them they have provided a seemingly endless supply of tax-avoidance schemes to exempt their clients from Corporation Tax, Income Tax, Capital Gains Tax and Development Land Tax. The Inland Revenue's reaction has been to challenge every scheme through the courts on the basis of existing law, but they have had few successes. And attempts to change the law and thus prevent further abuses have been met by yet more schemes, revealing more undiscovered loopholes. The speed with which these have appeared suggests that they have been prepared in advance, and produced to order off the shelf. In consequence, for at least the past five years, no taxpayer in the top tax brackets, and no successful company, has been without a means of avoiding his obligations to the Exchequer.

The market for these schemes is vast and growing, reflecting a rapid decline in moral attitudes to paying tax. The amounts of money involved are staggering. One scheme alone run by Roy Tucker in 1973 involved passing clients' money through a tiny £100 company registered at his home address: About £350m. passed through this channel. Another company used for this purpose took that total to over £600m. When questioned about this on the *London Programme*, Tucker admitted that the scheme cost the exchequer about £30m. He based this on the most conservative assumptions – the true figure could be as high as £60m. And there may be more, as yet undiscovered, £100 companies that were used for the same purpose. There have certainly been other schemes. One client alone, George Wimpey and Co., netted Godfrey Bradman £2.8m. for a saving of £18m. in corporation tax through a reverse annuity scheme that effectively turned Wimpey into a tax-exempt insurance house. With fees averaging 20 per cent of the tax saved, some tidy fortunes have been made by the avoidance experts. It is impossible to know how much money, in total, the taxman has been deprived of but one Inland Revenue official, Head of the Anti-Avoidance section, is adamant that several hundred million pounds are involved.

Given the amounts of money at stake, and the glaring inequities the tax avoidance industry has thrown up, some government action was inevitable. Simply amending the legislation as loopholes come to light has had little affect; new schemes being quickly substituted for the old. There were really only three options open. New legislation, broadly phrased, could have been introduced. Some countries, for example Australia, already have such laws. Known as blanket legislation, it seeks to invalidate any arrangement designed solely or with the main object of reducing tax. We already have

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such legislation covering certain areas where avoidance has been rife, for example in the dealing of securities, and this could have been extended to cover all arrangements. However experience of such legislation has not been happy. The courts are left to interpret intentionally vague laws, and in Australia they have shown considerable reluctance to do so. Understandably, if legislation is vague, courts will often give the benefit of any doubt – to the taxpayer.

Conservatives, and avoidance experts themselves, argue that avoidance is only a symptom of a wider malaise, caused by the penal tax rates the Government tries to impose. Their solution, defeatist for anyone of egalitarian persuasions, is to cut the top tax rates, thus killing both the demand and the industry. Yet in the United States, where the top rates for income tax are only 50 per cent, tax avoidance is a thriving industry, and has been for years. The marginal rate of tax is unlikely to be that related to the tax rates.

The final option, and the Government's choice, is to use the law to catch schemes retrospectively. But the precedent they are attempting to set is a dangerous one. Cause for concern stems from the recent report of the Ombudsman. Of all the civil service authorities, the Inland Revenue was shown to have exceeded its powers the most. The collection of taxes must be conducted in the framework of an existing body of law lest Revenue powers be further abused. Furthermore, at a time of considerable opposition to the Government's blacklist on firms paying wage increases in excess of the stage three guidelines, this move will be seen as yet another attempt towards rule by fiat. Just as the blacklist is accused of arbitrary application, so already has the application of this legislation. Of three loopholes closed in the present budget, only one has. Government thinking may be that the Tucker been singled out as a target

In all probability the answer is that he has Government thinking may be that the threat of more retrospective action will be sufficient to eradicate the industry altogether by increasing the risks involved. It is widely rumoured that Tucker will now turn his hand, and his considerable fortune, to other activities. But new firms are springing up, and they report that clients do not appear to be deterred by recent developments. In all likelihood the industry will be driven further underground, with schemes less widely distributed so as not to arouse the taxman's suspicions. Only repeated and widespread use of retrospective powers can possibly eradicate the industry altogether, and this may prove a different precedent to follow.

The parliamentary standing committee that will be debating this measure is likely to be split on the issue. All 15 Conservatives have united against the measure, under the leadership of Peter Reese, a noted Tax barrister. He has intimate knowledge of the avoidance industry, and indeed of the scheme in question. All prospective clients are shown counsel's opinion on the validity of the scheme under existing laws. Reese was one of those to supply a favourable professional opinion for Tucker's ill-fated scheme. Enoch Powell, on a constitutional matter such as this, is likely to add his support to the Conservatives, as is Pardoe whose statements have been in keeping with the Tories' general attitudes to tax reform. Against these are 17 Labour MPs, who will be united in their opposition to tax avoiders. But there is some chance that within the Labour ranks there will be at least one who is equally opposed to the departure from normal parliamentary practice that is proposed. If such a man exists, he would do well to state his case, but the word is that all Labour MPs on the Standing Committee will toe the Government line.

The debate will not end there however: the tax avoidance industry has thrown up yet another challenge to our ailing and overcomplex tax system. A democratic means of enforcing the claims of the Revenue must be found, and it is likely that it will only be found in a drastic reform and simplification of our burgeoning statutes. This clause may yet fail at the Report Stage, but it is hoped that it will provoke the wider reform that is so desperately needed.

Tim Albert: Educational failure in a green and leafy suburb

Unlike Brixton and the East End, the London Borough of Redbridge is not an obvious battleground for a race war. Comfortable and residential, with easy access to the rural spaces of Essex in the north and east, it is a borough with few housing shortages, prosperous shopping centres, and one of the highest rates of library use in Britain, and, for its 230,000 residents, an unemployment rate of only 2 per cent. The 3,000 West Indians there have a comparably comfortable and stable life, many of them clerical officers, supervisors and teachers. Compared with the issue that currently obsesses the borough's overwhelming Conservative majority – how to retain educational selectivity in the well-heeled north of Redbridge – race is just not important.

That does not necessarily matter; one can argue that it is precisely to areas like Redbridge – secure, comfortable and stable – that one must look if there is to be any chance of a peaceful multi-racial future. But the borough has recently seen launched (to little national reaction) a depressing report that shows that all is *not* well in their immigrant community. A report by the Community Relations Council and a West Indian self help group called the Black Peoples Progressive Association has examined closely the academic progress of the 800 West Indians in some of the borough's schools.

Even in tree-lined Redbridge, far from receiving from their education a foundation to help them succeed even moderately in British society, young West Indians are learning how to fail, showing spectacularly it is impossible to be black and upwardly mobile in Britain.

The working group persuaded the education department to analyse according to racial groups the results of a test (the Joint Four Test) given to 11 year olds in eight multi-racial schools. These tests have been standardised to a mean of 100, and 563 white children in the schools, which tended to be in poorer parts of the borough, were just below the average in the upper 90s. The 66 West Indian children, however, scored only 85 in the verbal reasoning test, 88.6 in the English test and 86.1 in the mathematical test.

That was not all; the study group looked at other indices. Although West Indian pupils made up only 2 per cent of the borough's school population, in both an ESN school and a remedial unit for 'socially maladjusted' children which they examined, they made up *more* than 8 per cent. In Loxford High School, a split-site comprehensive with the highest proportion of black pupils in the borough, 46 per cent of West Indians were chosen for remedial help in the first year compared with 27 per cent for first year pupils generally. West Indians got an average of 0.3 O-level/grade 1 CSEs (compared with 0.7 for Loxford High School pupils generally) and 1.0 O-level/CSE all grades (compared with 4.2 generally). *In 1977, although West Indian pupils made up 10 per cent of the school population, not one of them passed an A level.*

So what is going wrong? A lengthy appendix refutes any suggestion that innately lower intelligence is a cause. It puts forward a number of minor contributory factors, such as the unsettling effects of recent immigration, the higher incidence of single parent families among West Indians, and the fact that they tend to have the worst social conditions. The authors also say that the survival of West Indian dialect may have some effect on school performances, and suggest that some West Indian parents have not come to terms with the different cultural factors in cold urban Britain, particularly in attitudes to discipline, to play and to new expectations of school.

But the key factor, they argue, is 'self identity and the effects of a hostile society.' The argument is this: a West Indian child grows up in a basically hostile society, and one which portrays black people in a negative fashion. This can be done, for example, through stereotypes like that of the bone-in-the-nose slave of comparatively recent childrens' literature, or through unconscious attitudes of the teachers who tend to react to all West Indian pupils as if they are good at running fast, playing cricket well and dancing, but who have no academic aptitude. These attitudes, continues the thesis, are internalised, and lead to a lack of confidence and a reduction of motivation among the West Indians. Asian children do significantly better, but this is because they have a more definite culture of their own, which enables them to counter-act some of these processes.

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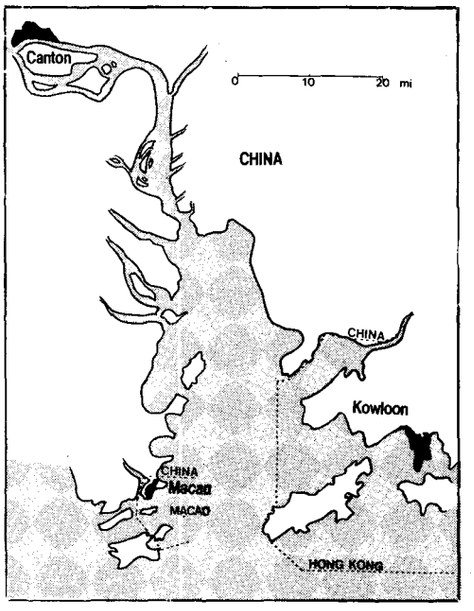
Red Flags, Running Dogs and Air Conditioned Horses

In Macao, communism and capitalism rub shoulders in a strangely intimate fashion – which Hong Kong might usefully emulate. MURRAY SAYLE reports.



Do you remember the days when backward little Portugal used to be held out as a grisly example of what could happen to *us*, if we gave up the Protestant work ethic and took to drinking wine, cooking with garlic and having a good time?

Well, the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of Hong Kong, when they can spare the time from making money, still feel pretty much that way about Macao, the tiny Portuguese enclave on the other side of the estuary of the Pearl River. But the habit of glancing down one's nose tends to obscure the view on either side and the British may be overlooking some valuable lessons. As remnants of the world's two biggest empires, Hong Kong and Macao are engaged in the same ticklish business of making out with their natural motherland. And Macao has been getting the breaks. Even as you read this, the Governor of Macao, Colonel Jose Garcia Leandro, is engaged in a three-week tour of the beauty spots of Southern China, the official guest of the government of the People's Republic.

It may seem odd to the Asian innocent that the fiercely nationalistic Red China should still be harbouring these two colonial relics. The old hands whisper that the Red Chinese put up with Hong Kong because of what they get out of it, namely U.S. $2 billion a year in hard currency. But what do they get out of Macao? The whole enclave, a peninsula and two small adjacent islands, is only six square miles. The population is tiny by Asian standards: 248,628, all Chinese except for 7,000 Portuguese citizens and 1,500 odds and ends.

Hong Kong has the best port on the China coast, and serves as a major outlet for almost half China's exports to the world. The harbour at Macao has to be dredged continually to accommodate its only traffic: (Red) Chinese fishing boats and the daily ferries (equipped with banks of slot machines) which bring two million gamblers a year from Hong Kong to leave their money in Macao's four major casinos, dog-racing track, Jai-Alai stadium, mah jong and fan tan parlours and discreet brothels.

Apart from gambling, there's a little backyard electronics and sweatshop knitting of pullovers – small stuff, but enough to attract negotiators recently from the EEC to persuade Macao to sign its own 'voluntary' agreement restricting textile exports to Europe, which shows you how windy the weavers of the West are getting these days.

Then there are tourists, who come to drink Portuguese wine and see Macao's enchanting architecture, crumbling Renaissance villas with Chinese roofs washed in milkshake shades of pink and green – a cityscape which restores one's faith in human sensibility after the concrete cliffs of Hong Kong. For jaded gastronomes there are dog-meat restaurants, illegal in Hong Kong, and enormous Portuguese dinners of dried codfish stewed in olive oil.

China, it is true, supplies Macao with all its food (except the last two items) and its water, at a price: it has been suggested that this is the wages of sin, a way for Peking to get its cut from the tables without appearing to condone gambling.

Colonel Leandro's sightseeing trip is not the only mark of official Chinese favour which has recently fallen to Macao. Last October Colonel Leandro was invited, for the first time, to a cocktail party improbably thrown by the large communist community in Macao to celebrate the anniversary of the Chinese Revolution and the freeing of the Chinese motherland from the shackles of comprador capitalism. Then the Governor's parents and mother-in-law were taken on a tour of Chinese beauty spots by Ho Yin, the enigmatic figure who is both Macao's richest businessman and Macao's leading communist. This June, a Portuguese soccer team goes to Peking.

All this goodwill, pressed down and running over, is lavished on a country which is (with Eire) the only one in the West to have no diplomatic relations with Red China. The last Governor of Macao to visit Peking went there in 1950, expecting to get his marching orders from the victorious Reds. (Sir Alexander Grantham, the Governor of Hong Kong, went at the same time, and was told by the Chinese to sit tight for the moment but to have nothing to do with the Portuguese, who would soon be sent packing).

Even more surprising a turn-up for the books has been the recent visit to Peking of the Portuguese banker Manuel Bulhosa, to discuss plans for an oil refinery on one of Macao's offshore islands to process Chinese crude for international sale.

All this can only mean that someone up there in Peking likes Macao, whatever Marx and Mao have to say about comprador capitalists. Our man in Hong Kong, Sir Murray Maclehose, widely regarded as the most capable Governor the colony has ever had, has so far received no parallel invitation to visit China. Where Macao leads, can Hong Kong be far behind?

Some of the shrewdest China-watchers in the East think not. John Swire and Sons, one of the oldest (and richest) British trading firms in Hong Kong recently opened their first-ever branch in Macao, at a little-reported ceremony addressed by Swire's chairman, John Bremridge. 'We seek no flash-in-the-pan profits' said Bremridge, 'but sound industrial or commercial growth,' adding that 'my friend Mr Ho Yin' had agreed to accept the job of honorary president of the new venture, making Ho surely the only Chinese communist ever to be titular head of a British trading conglomerate, even of the Macao branch.

It seems clear that the new post-Mao leadership of China, cautious and even conservative (in communist terms), worried by China's military weakness in face of the mechanised Russian threat, worried about China's relative industrial backwardness and the resulting shortage of consumer goods, but still determined to hew as close as they can to Mao's path, are looking for short-term arrangements with friendly Western countries which will, on their time-scale, see China well into the next century. Macao (and thus Hong Kong) seem to be prominent in the plan.

Why start with Macao? Partly because it's smaller, perhaps. An equally likely reason may be the political changes which have been going on there in the past few years, observed by no one but the world's tiny handful of dedicated, port-soaked Macao watchers. Changes which Peking, on the whole, clearly likes.

Not long after the overthrow of Salazar's regime in 1974, a delegation headed by Commander Catarino Salgado, who had lost an arm fighting in Africa, arrived in Macao with the worthy aim (from a Lisbon viewpoint) of handing it back to China. Greatly to Salgado's surprise (he was a new chum in the East) the Chinese said thanks, but no thanks. Further, they indicated that they did not like Salgado, who was, they thought, pro-Russian, which is far worse than being a comprador capitalist. After a scene involving a woman in a seedy Macao nightclub (although not the one which, it is said, you reach by climbing up a bamboo ladder) Salgado and his colleague, Major Vitoras Alves, a member of the Revolutionary Junta in Lisbon, were put aboard the next boat for Hong Kong by Governor Leandro, to evident Chinese approval.

Salgado did not, of course, negotiate directly with Peking, but with Peking's man in Macao, none other than the newly

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appointed British company president (honorary) Ho Yin.

A man of great wealth, Ho controls, among many other things, the Macao electricity company, the *canidrome*, (the dog-racing track) the bus company, the biggest bank, (and it goes without saying) he enjoys the confidence of the Macao 'tongs', or semi-secret criminal societies.

In his other *persona* as a good Communist, Ho leads the delegation from Macao to the China National People's Congress in Peking (in Chinese eyes all Chinese residents of Macao and Hong Kong are 'national compatriots' and citizens, if they want to be, of the People's Republic) and in March this year Ho's position was further solidified when he was appointed by Peking to the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (a different body from the Congress) as the only member from Macao. He was already a member, appointed by the Governor, of the Macao Legislative Assembly.

Ho himself defines his job disarmingly as 'running messages between Macao and China.' His ideological position, is, of course, equivocal if you want to be logical about it, and what TV anchorman would pass up the chance to skewer this affable survivor (who seldom appears in public without a bodyguard armed with machine guns) on the propriety of a communist running a dog-racing track? Ho, sensibly, refuses to be interviewed on any such theological niceties.

The extent of Ho's supervisory role can, however, be estimated by the fate of the recent plan by Governor Leandro, well-intentioned, to nominate the first distinguished Chinese Catholic as Bishop of Macao. The project was approved by the Vatican, Lisbon, and Macao's 23,000 Catholics. Like all important decisions, it was referred as a matter of routine to Ho Yin. Back came the answer from Peking: no.

The thinking is clear. What the Portuguese do in Macao is their business, but no Chinese 'national compatriot' can be a crozier-carrying Catholic with Peking's blessing.

Within these limits (and, at every step, with Ho's approval) there have been many changes in Macao since 1974, even a modest degree of political progress. The new Portuguese Constitution defines Macao as a 'special territory, a part of China under Portuguese administration.' The 200-man Portuguese military garrison has been withdrawn and there are now only Chinese policemen, with a few Portuguese. Some 40 majors and colonels can be seen, often in uniform, in Macao's crowded streets, but they all hold administrative jobs and are, like Governor Leandro himself, part of Portugal's pool of officers left over from the colonial wars.

In 1975 a Legislative Assembly with an elected majority was inaugurated (only Portuguese citizens can vote). This could, in theory, dismiss the Governor and legislate Macao into China, which may provide a basis for some far-distant legal transfer of power to the People's Republic.

It is possible to lead a perfectly decent Communist life in Macao for those so inclined. There are 24,000 children in communist schools, 20,000 in those run by the Macao Government. A Peking-owned operation, the Nam Kwong (Southern Light) Trading Company is building warehouses by Macao Harbour to store China-made products. The Macao fishing-boats straddle both worlds in, perhaps, the most dizzying of all Macao's feats of political acrobatics: they are registered in the People's Republic, land part of their catch there and the rest in Macao, where their communist crews live ashore, visit the casinos, and in some cases send their bewildered children to Catholic schools.

Portugal (always a small winner in the world's casino) gets some 2,000 jobs for Portuguese, including hard-to-place redundant military men, a modest outlet for cod and wine, and the distant prospect of one day honourably laying down the strange burden which her adventurous history has left her – if and when China permits.

Judging by the hospitality offered to Governor Leandro and his mother-in-law, Macao is now near enough to Chinese ideas of how a treaty port should be run — without a treaty, we might note, and without any formal negotiations at all, beyond the toings and froings of the ever-helpful Ho Yin. Are the Chinese trying to tell us what they see in the tea-leaves for Hong Kong, a responsibility which is not only twenty times bigger, with a population approaching five million, but potentially far more calamitous?

> 'Are the Chinese trying to tell us what they see in the tea leaves for Hong Kong?'

Considered as a rent-a-flag exercise, Britain gets very little out of Hong Kong – a naval base which guards only itself, jobs for a few old hands from the Empire with handsome salaries and no British taxes, some interesting landing rights for British Airways, the elusive prospect of first crack at the growing market in China for sophisticated weapon systems and Western industrial technology.

To offset these modest benefits, many Hong Kong products are direct competition for Britain's, especially in the textile and electronic fields, and Hong Kong is increasingly being squeezed out of Britain and the Common Market.

Hong Kong is hardly a place of which Britain can be proud: it is a society where derelict old men sleep in three-decker wire cages, while the horses at the new Hong Kong racecourse have air-conditioned stables; and where policemen under investigation for corruption receive good conduct medals from a beaming Governor.

Some elements of the Macao scenario would be difficult to extrapolate directly to Hong Kong. Britain still keeps a small military force in Hong Kong. Apart from the week-end Hong Kong Regiment, three battalions of Gurkhas and one of the Green Jackets are there not to fight off the invading Red Army (front line strength two and a half million), but so that the Governor will sleep easier at nights knowing that he has a force at his disposal more reliable than the Hong Kong police, who staged a near-mutiny only last October.

Britain suffers from having, not one, but three treaties with China about Hong Kong, all extorted from the dying Ching dynasty and therefore all in Chinese eyes worthless. According to the Second Convention of Peking, 365 square miles (including half Hong Kong airport) is meant to revert to China in 1997, while, according to the others, Hong Kong Island and Kowloon are supposed to be British 'in perpetuity'.

It would seem at first glance that some dead legal wood could be usefully cleared by a unilateral British declaration, Macao style, that the whole lot is part of China and will one day go back. But the thicket of Hong Kong building leases and property rights which literal British minds demand are all based on these treaties, and such a declaration would quickly be followed by a slump in the Hong Kong stock market and the flight of capital and capitalists to some other tax haven – and we don't want that, do we?

However, other parts of the Macao experiment seem to be transferable. Hong Kong at present has no democratic political processes of any kind, beyond elections among ratepayers for a municipal council to discuss drains and water rates. China, it would seem, might accept some modest progress here. A more structured, but still informal machinery of consultation with Peking, along Ho Yin lines might be useful – messages at the moment go by the New China News Agency, which acts as China's consulate in Hong Kong.

One disturbing factor is the immense crowd of potential losers in the event of a nasty, prolonged transfer of power to China. At a pinch, Macao's 23,000 Catholics could all go to Portugal. But the years of prosperity in Hong Kong have produced a Chinese middle class of more than a million, rising every year – people with no roots in the People's Republic, who would very likely take to boats, Vietnam-style. No-one would want them, least of all – let us be honest – Britain.

What is really needed is a change in the Hong Kong spirit, in preparation for the transfer of power which must come one day. Hong Kong is, at the top, one of the most selfish societies in the world – the rich pay next to nothing for defence or welfare, and nothing for the development of the vast unknown hinterland which keeps Hong Kong lavishly fed.

There is still a feeling among some of the big winners that Hong Kong is a western colony being held, not in trust for China, but as an international tax haven for *them* – an unnatural city, the cruel, hemmed-in, flashy capital of nowhere. The real China, in its present mood, clearly wants to build a long term relationship with Hong Kong, reasonably acceptable to both sides. Can it be that complaisant, comical little Macao shows the way to the future?

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New York Diary

☐ It could not be said that the citizens of New York take a passionate interest in the United Nations, whose headquarters rise up in their midst. It is a place to demonstrate in front of when Arafat comes to town and an outfit to denounce as a talking shop for Third-Worlders who leech on Uncle Sam and then shake their fists at him. Consequently the UN special session on disarmament, which opened last Tuesday and which will continue till the end of June, has not provoked much commotion. This apathy has not been much damaged by President Carter, who now seems to have cancelled plans even to visit the session. It is hard to see why he is shunning it, unless out of embarrassment at the total failure of his stated resolve to limit US arms sales abroad. Sales, sadly, have never been higher. But even so, it was assumed that Jimmy would visit, if only to call for something agreeably vague, like total disarmament in the next ten years.

☐ The reason really seems to be a cold-war fever sweeping the 'opinion-moulding' sectors of the polity. The impending SALT agreement with the Russians, which is the familiar negotiated leap forward in the arms race, is regarded on the Right as akin to treason. On the Right, indeed, the only quandary is whether to back Israel or Saudi Arabia as the most potent force against the Russians. And now the alleged Cuban backing for the Katangese gendarmes has brought renewed hysteria about Russo-Cuban power-grabs in Africa. The French are not mentioned. One revered columnist, Joseph Kraft, has even urged a US naval blockade of Cuba. Only Andrew Young, US ambassador to the UN, seems to have retained some sanity, perhaps because – by the nature of his job – he has to consort with other sorts and conditions of men and is also black. But the sad truth is, in this context, that the administration and the press have about as much interest in the special session as they do in clog dancing. There will be a demonstration by anti-nuclear forces outside the UN on Saturday but even this will not mask the fact that there is no potent political push for disarmament.

☐ It looks as though homosexuals will be bounding back into the closet all the way across the United States. City after city is following the example of Dade County and repealing laws forbidding discrimination in such matters as housing and employment. The age of Anita Bryant is upon us. After Miami came a similar repeal in St Paul, Minnesota, and last Tuesday night the voters in Eugene, Oregon, passed a similar repeal there. 'There's a tremendous amount of paranoia right here in New York', a seasoned homosexual campaigner for gay civil rights remarked to me as he awaited the vote in Eugene. Although Mayor Koch outlawed discrimination by executive order last January, actual legislation – now on its seventh journey through the city council – is still bottled up in committee and it looks as though Mayor Koch will be happy to leave it there. Thus it seems that five years of success in homosexual campaigns for legal security are drawing to a close. There are about 38 cities and counties across the country with legislation on which evangelical religious groups, right-wing politicians and so forth will be happy to try to force repeal. There's an irony here. Planners are finding that homosexuals are often salvation for inner city areas. Middle-class heterosexuals get married and finally head for the suburbs. Middle-class homosexuals stay put and tend to have disposable cash since there are no children to put through school. Thus, as on the upper west side of New York, local restaurants and stores prosper and the neighbourhood is stabilised. Such stability is instantly dissipated in a repressive legal climate, since the landlords can blackmail their homosexual tenants with higher and higher rents under threat of eviction, till finally they flee. Meanwhile *Business Week* reports that corporations now seek divorced executives, since they are easier and cheaper to shift around the country.

☐ I am a staff writer for the *Village Voice* and since it is now owned by Rupert Murdoch people often ask me what it is like having him as an employer. They say this with the narrow gaze of someone regarding a henchman of Rasputin. The answer is that Rupert has little to do with the *Voice*, which makes $1.5m. pre-tax per year, sells 150,000 copies a week and has changed hands three times in the last five years. In fact he has only rarely tried to interfere in its operations. His hands are more than filled with the *New York Post*, the afternoon paper he bought for $32m. 18 months ago and which, despite circulation gains, is losing around $10m. a year. Over the last few months the publishers of the city's three major newspapers have been negotiating contracts with the various unions making up their work force. Murdoch, battle-scarred from such combat in Australia and London, seems to have been able to show the local lads a thing or two. He deftly negotiated a separate agreement with the drivers, thus assuring his paper could be distributed. Then he flew in people from a paper he owns in San Antonio, Texas, to demonstrate with a dummy run that management could put out a strike-breaking paper. Now he is mopping up, a process involving drastic staff cuts. Meanwhile his proconsul in charge of the *Voice*, a nice man who suddenly got the bit between his teeth, called in our editor two weeks ago and told her to be off the premises by the end of the day. He was going to put in a new man from the *New York Times* instead. The *Voice* is probably one of the few papers left on earth where it is hard to get away with this sort of summary behaviour. Over 80 of us rose up and swore to quit unless Ms Marianne Partridge was reinstated forthwith. The principles at issue were certain guarantees of tenure and independence. There were the usual long, long meetings, fiery oratory and the like, but also something less usual: victory. A few hours before the walk-off Partridge was restored to power and jubilation reigned. Not 'Potemkin'. But in these sour Seventies something all the same.

☐ Courtroom habitués not glutted by Son of Sam have fallen to mulling over other interesting passages of justice they had observed in recent months. The case of a black man called Linwood Green provoked particular hilarity. Some months ago, Linwood, so the accusation ran, had proceeded to the Sahara Hotel on the West Side and there engaged a prostitute for oral ministration and relief. The ungrateful Linwood, ministration terminated, had allegedly locked the prostitute in the bathroom, run downstairs, robbed the manager and shot him three times. Then he went upstairs again and shot the prostitute in the mouth, the bullet knocking out four of her teeth and lodging in her gum. The climax of his first trial came when the prostitute swore that Linwood, whom she had picked out in an identification parade, was uncircumcised. Linwood produced ample evidence that he had been circumcised well before the events in question. Result: hung jury. At the second trial the prostitute testified that she had not fully understood the word 'circumcised'. She thought it meant 'erect'. The accused was circumcised, she said, but despite all her efforts had failed to achieve the other condition. One of the jurors, a middle-aged Puerto Rican, then approached the bench and informed the judge that while offering a friend similar services to the prostitute's some years before, he had also failed to induce tumescence. His partner had finally hauled off and knocked his teeth out. Hence, the juror argued, he could understand the murderous frustration of the accused, whose lawyer should have pleaded him *non compos*. The juror asked to disqualify himself and the judge refused. Once again there was a hung jury. The DA tried one more time and after a third trial, amid much contradictory evidence, Linwood was finally acquitted.

Alexander Cockburn

John Mortimer will write next week's London Diary.

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard

☐ According to a psychiatrist, Dr Sandy Bourne, consultant at the Tavistock Clinic, Korchnoi could have sacrificed his queen as a result of a Freudian slip. Although Dr Bourne believes that hereditary ability must be crucial in great chess players, he says that Korchnoi, like every man, must have complex emotions about powerful women which somehow on this occasion could have made him sacrifice his queen. – *Sunday Times* (J. Katzenellenbogen)

☐ Kidnapping has reached epidemic proportions amid the gnome-filled gardens of Suffolk. And mysterious messages signed 'Gnome Exodus' are being sent to a local newspaper demanding bags of jelly babies as ransom. – *Daily Mail* (J. Fumfrey)

☐ Manager George Petchey said: 'We have tremendous supporters but when they are not they are a rabble.' – *Sunday Mirror* (Geoff Bradshaw)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Oh What a Beautiful Evening

To be invited to attend, by some kind person involved in the production, a London theatrical first night is almost invariably a hazardous experience. Behind one's polite and smiling face and beneath the trim dinner-jacket lies the thudding heart. One longs for friends to do well and is as anxious as they. I say 'almost' because every now and then an offering comes along that is financially and artistically fail-proof. *My Fair Lady* was one such. It had already run two years in New York. Errand-boys, if they had still existed, could have whistled its tunes from their bicycles. The dresses and décor were by our very own brilliant Beaton. The English stars were known and much loved, had created the original roles and success was written all over them. There had been eight faultless previews. The theatre was already sold out for over a year. The Drury Lane curtain, when it rose on that glamorous first night, need not, in a sense, ever have risen at all.

A first night that I, and doubtless its performers, would rather forget was Orton's *What the Butler Saw*. The upper parts of the house bore all in silence until the final fifteen minutes and then exploded into rage. I noted an interesting bodily manifestation. When the displeased noises loudly started, the imperturbable cast merely quickened its pace a little but the tips of the ears of Coral Browne and Sir Ralph (both quite unaccustomed to being rudely shouted at) turned an extraordinary bright salmon pink, fully visible from where I sat, shrinking, half way back in the dress circle. Sometimes the audience's objections are kept till actual curtain-fall. No star however great, is safe from the gallery's comments. Gladys Cooper herself, given to mumbling a little when a play wasn't up to much, did not always escape ('We love you, Gladys, but you *must* speak up'). Sometimes the objections are comical. There was once a longish play, written for two characters only, a husband and wife. The scene was their living room, the plot their everyday lives. Nothing much happened and the audience was inclined to doze off a little, but suddenly in the third act there was a sharp ring at the front door bell. 'Whoever can that be?' said the wife, upon which a pleading and desperate voice from above shouted 'Let them in, whoever they are'.

It was the humble view of Rodgers and Hammerstein and of many others who have lived their lives in the theatre that 'the audience is always right'. If, for whatever reason, the customers are unhappy, the blame must never be laid at their door. The blood of theatre-lovers will run cold when they learn, from Frederick Nolan's fascinating *The Sound of Their Music* (Dent, £6.50), how close *Oklahoma* came to never happening at all and, many years previously, Richard Rodgers' career with it (but for a chance telephone call, he would long ago have abandoned his attempts at composing and gone into the profitable and only slightly less noisy world of babies' underwear). Indeed, fortunate chances favoured this revolutionary musical everywhere. Poor Larry Hart, a dedicated dipsomaniac and a deviant frequenter of what our author politely calls 'manners-be-damned parties', with whom Rodgers had faithfully collaborated for twenty-five years, was physically and mentally finished and there, ready to replace him, was Oscar Hammerstein, his talents not much tested since *Show Boat*. There too was the Theatre Guild, owners of the ideal material on which to base an unmistakably American musical, a play called *Green Grow the Lilacs*, though the Theatre Guild were less successful with their suggestion of two stars for leading roles (Shirley Temple and Groucho Marx). And then there was the happy fact that Rodgers preferred to put tunes to lyrics already written (with Hart it had had to be the other way round), and Hammerstein preferred this method too. Incredible to find that it took him a full week to decide ('Oh what a beautiful morning') that it was permissible to start the first two lines of the play ('Oh what a beautiful day') with the word 'Oh'. More incredible still was the fact that Rodgers completed the melody in exactly ten minutes ('It took nothing to write . . . The results are better if it comes in a rush'). Asked later how long it had taken him to compose the whole of *Oklahoma*, with its dozen or so numbers, the ballet music and overture, Richard Rodgers said that, with the best will in the world, he couldn't possibly make the time spent on composition come to a second longer than five hours.

Oklahoma was originally called *Away We Go!* As it turned its back on the European operetta and the gaudily conventional escapist pieces that American audiences were accustomed to and which, in films, dear Jeanette MacDonald, all flashing teeth and bright bird-song, brought so winningly to an expectant world, backers for the venture were hard to find. 'The only risky thing in the theatre is not to take risks' and the curtain was to rise on an empty stage, apart from a staunch aunt churning at a churn. No rows of inanely smiling chorus girls were to be seen, and in due course there would be both a villain and a murder. Mike Todd summed up the general feeling with 'No girls, no gags, no good'. Even the warm-hearted Jerome Kern described the score as 'condescending'. And it was pointed out that there were already over 100 songs called 'Oklahoma'. Eventually the money was raised and the reluctant backers became, quite rapidly, millionaires. During the try-out at Boston, the entire cast caught German measles, their spots concealed by extra heavy make-up, but Boston took them to its welcoming heart and became for ever the pre-Broadway home of Rodgers and Hammerstein shows ('I wouldn't open anything, not even a can of tomatoes, anywhere but in Boston'). The play then moved to New York and the rest we know.

I was fortunate enough, hopelessly stage-struck as I have been since the age of four (*Peter Pan* at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith), to be invited to the London first night, again at Drury Lane, on April 30th, 1947. Here was another fail-proof. The songs and lyrics were widely known. Excited travellers back from New York spoke incoherently of its charm and magic. It was said, rightly, that it did not matter that it contained no established stars. The lights lowered and they took the curtain up on that virtually empty stage, ablaze with sunshine and ripening corn, and the cowboy, Curly, came strolling on to tell us what a beautiful morning it was. It was the first really agreeable thing to happen in London since the end of the war, an extraordinary uprush of happiness, and when the curtain finally fell, the cheers and applause combined in a weird and deafening wall of sound such as I have never heard before or since. Nor have I ever again seen seasoned critics actually weeping for joy. Nice to know they can.

But what, you ask, of *Carousel*? What of *South Pacific* and *The King and I*? What, above all, of *The Sound of Music*? Long ago at the Winter Garden Theatre there was a jolly musical called *Tell Me More*. The hero and heroine sang the title song, and it went:

He: 'You're the girl I adore'
She: 'Tell me more'
He: 'Other girls I deplore'
She: 'Tell me more'.

This powerful lyric ended with 'And though you've told me all you know, tell me more, tell me more, tell me more.' In a week or so, I hope to do just that.

Roger Woddis

Blonde Treasury

Mrs Thatcher has said in a magazine interview that she sometimes relaxes by reading poetry.

When life gets too frantic
And less than romantic,
I have a consistent routine:
While mixing a salad
I turn to a ballad,
As long as it isn't obscene.

I read Keats and Shelley
While making a jelly,
And frequently thumb through the Bard;
But after one sitting
I don't mind admitting
I do find him terribly hard.

Lord Tennyson fires me
And Kipling inspires me,
Though Burns is a poet I'd ban:
It's not just his sporran,
Let's face it, he's foreign
And goes on and on about Man.

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Letters to the Editor

The Hitlerwave

Sir, It is good to see NEW STATESMAN, under its new editorship giving German current affairs their full due. A pity therefore that Gitta Sereny's otherwise excellent article (NS 19 May) does not concentrate more on the ideological bias and scanty historical analysis of Fest's and Herrendoerfer's Hitler film. Despite the claim in press releases for the Berlin world premiere in June of last year that this is a film which 'explains' National Socialism, it does in fact do little to clarify the interlocking social, political and above all economic circumstances responsible for Hitler's rise to power. The massive financial support which flowed into the Nazi coffers from big business, and the advantages which accrued to monopoly capitalism from a fascist regime which could ensure a passive labour force and, with its aggressive expansionist foreign policies, guarantee big profits for German's heavy industry and armaments manufacturers, are scarcely broached. Instead, the whole drift of the film is to attribute the success of National Socialism to the personality and particular talents of the Führer. There is repeated stress on Hitler's ability to restore shattered German pride and symbolise pseudo-mystical national aspirations, and on the erotic and religious charisma which aroused 'expectations of enormous potency'. (Especially crass are shots of hysterical women followed by film of a gigantic, phallus-like Zeppelin.)

The makers claim that to understand the fascination which Hitler exerted is to understand Nazism, while the film's many detractors see only the stimulation of a dangerous nostalgia or, like Siegfried Lenz, accuse it of 'moral amputation'. Such reservations surely miss the point. The real disservice is the propagation of a view of history as the product of above life size individuals. By failing totally to illuminate the structural connections between capitalism and fascism, the film constructs a highly misleading version of Germany's recent past. As the academic front man for what is, despite its protestations of pedagogic seriousness, a speculative venture financed largely by big business able to offset its investment against tax, Joachim Fest has been party to a travesty of the scholarship displayed in his Hitler biography.

MARTIN KANE

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Sir, I was impressed by Ms Sereny's account of young Germans facing the new 'Hitlerwave' (NS, 19 May). Her piece demonstrates anew the need for more strenuous efforts to acquaint the young there with the Nazi past. At the same time the article seems to show the importance of a clear, well thought-out concept for achieving that educational goal: without such a mental compass the result of much instruction and exhortation will be mere deadbeat wallops of moralism and abhorrence which, however sincere and unimpeachable, do not equip to understand and – though Heaven forbid! – next time round the *skirling* of old prayer-wheels will not exorcise new ghosts.

Scholarly treatment, analytic discussion and moral instruction are certainly not provided by those who, like the ex-con praetorians in the wake of Watergate, peddle up and down the country tarted-up reams about their coat tail-riding years with the powerful; nor will these things be found in the dissertations of crackpot mythshatterers trying to interpret away Auschwitz.

'Historical perspective' or that murky thing called objectivity are no denial of moral condemnation as the attitude to be adopted towards the Hitlerite régime and its industrialised mass murder, administrative thuggery and base, deranged mendacity. But if no attempt is made to elucidate the mechanics, if there be such, of the politics and society during that period, inside and outside the third Reich, the fruit of all hortatory labours will be meagre.

No insights will then be gained and imparted to the young about the conditions which shaped the Nazi movement and were shaped by it (Hitler as creature and creator). We would instead confect a catalogue of satanic images and names, powerfully reinforced in their repulsiveness by the horrible testimonies of the historical survivors. However, as a demonology, this approach would only be another ersatz in lieu of an attempt to think and understand.

As a result, we would feel Ms Sereny's desire for self-censorship, treating Hitler and Nazism as a malign strain of bottle imps, to be handled by cautious and timely removal of the stopper only. We would then take refuge in countering the temptations of potboiler historiography and baneful ignorance by unconvincing affirmation of implausibly attained teenage perspicacity on the part of our elders (Ms Sereny's experience at the Nuremberg rally) or vague and, I fear, helpless recitals that some group, duly identified with the speaker's, will be on hand to safeguard the endangered freedoms (note the question-begging repetition of 'we' in Ms Sereny's last two paragraphs).

Deterrent images of horror and outrage will, *volens nolens*, be reduced to pale reflections as the past recedes unless they are sustained on the basis of rational knowledge and discerning interpretation. Anything else would be a stone for bread to future generations.

WOLFGANG KESSLER
(born 1951)

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Defeat at Grunwick

Sir, I have some idea of the depression that must be felt by the Grunwick strikers, for after the war I was involved in a strike that dragged on for months and finally finished with the members of the factory committee sitting round a conference table at union headquarters while a benign Arthur Deakin at the head of the table told us it was all over, and that few of us would get our jobs back.

What lessons? Very much as Anna Coote has them in her excellent article on Grunwick (NS 19 May). That workers are not united, that leaders do not always fight for their men, even with the best of causes, that bosses can take up intransigent positions, that loss can be bitter, especially for those with ties at a time when state benefits were meagre.

The gains? Perhaps more than anything else: pride to have been with a group of men and women of intelligence and ability and to have shared and experienced with them. Though we have not met since the end of that strike, I still regard them with affection. There are times when there is a need to make a stand though the chance of success may be slight. In the long run however one can see the gain for the movement: we made our stand, the cost to the management was high, management learnt the need to talk to their work people.

To the Grunwick workers I would say: thanks for the stand, don't let bitterness mar your fight, you fought well and I am sure it was not in vain.

For your information the strike was at A. C. Cossors, then at Highbury, in 1946.

PHILIP POLLARD

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Arab Disunity?

Sir, David Jacobs (NS 19 May) claims that it was Arab disunity which caused the Arabs to change their attitude towards Jewish immigration in Palestine.

He is wrong. When the Emir Faisal, in 1920, extended a 'hearty welcome home' to the Jews, he was under the impression that the immigrating Jews would be prepared to live as free and equal citizens in the society which they were joining. He did not realise that the leaders of the Zionist movement were intent on displacing the resident population. If he had had the opportunity of reading the diaries of Theodor Herzl, he would have learnt that as early as 1902 the Zionist leaders were debating the means by which the land of the resident Arab population could be expropriated and the population itself 'spirited across the borders' (See the *Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl, vol I,* p.88).

The more the Arab leaders became conscious of the real aims of the Zionist movement, the more they resisted. This had nothing to do with disunity.

DR TIMOTHY C. NIBLOCK

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Levin's Version

Sir, The pungent comment on the unspeakable Levin by James Fenton (NS 19 May) so well describes his style ('vituperation or gush') and his compliments ('like being hosed down with maple syrup'), that it really seems unnecessary to argue. No one would believe Levin's interpretation of James Fenton's views.

How thousands must still miss the incomparable Sir Harold Hobson's feature in the *Sunday Times.* This so knowledgeable, wise and, above all, thoroughly civilised human being, one feels, could only be the product of England with its long history of free thought – and great theatre. To have Levin instead is indeed going from the sublime to the ridiculous . . .

LEON VITKINDAS

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Common Language

Sir, 'Even this slow process costs tens of millions of pounds a year, and the cost could well quadruple with enlargement and direct elections', says Christopher Price (Westminster Diary, 5 May).

It's not often that one of our representatives comes right out and alludes openly to the astronomical costs resulting from archaic attempts to cope with the language chaos – attempts which, as Mr Price indicates, are not even efficient. But one wishes he were not quite so complacent about it. Doesn't it *matter* that our money is being wasted in this way? Can Mr Price dismiss with a shrug the prospect of quadrupling the burden? Well, I'm sorry to say I don't find Mr Price's name among the 56 MP's who have joined the Esperanto Parliamentary Group.

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Meanwhile, the Welsh 'would be wise to settle for something more modest', which seems to mean they should just make do with English, that 'oasis amidst a sea of umlauts and os and the like'. Presumably the Germans see German as an oasis amidst a sea of silent ghs, peripatetic apostrophes and the like? One thing is sure: they are all living in a linguistic desert.

W. AULD

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Flame of Life

Sir, I hesitate to correct the memory of Arthur Marshall (NS 5 May) who in recent times has been the chief cause of my NS subscription, so perhaps what follows could be regarded as a footnote.

Though it was indeed the late Bishop of London who (without having seen the play) publicly condemned *The Sacred Flame* and thus drastically improved its box-office returns in 1929, his objection didn't have much to do with the use of the word 'sacred', nor was the flame that of romantic passion. Maugham's play is, rather more topically for 1978, about an assisted suicide and the flame here thus meant Life. The plot, incidentally, about the rights of a man to cut off his own life when incurably paralysed, is echoed in a not dissimilar play called *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* currently to be found at the Mermaid: both cast lists, separated by fifty years, feature Sebastian Shaw.

By way of further advertising, might I be allowed to point out that all this information can be found in a biography of my grandmother, Gladys Cooper, the typescript of which I have just delivered to Heinemann?

SHERIDAN MORLEY

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Animal Virtues

Sir, Am I the only person to suspect that all those great Tory virtues exhibited in the 'new look' Conservative Party Political Broadcast the other day are in fact behaviour patterns derived almost solely from the animal kingdom?

Thus, this Tory TV commercial began with scenes illustrating the conquest and defence of territory (not entirely dissimilar from the aggressive but quite instinct-motivated behaviour of the robin in my garden?).

It continued with heavy emphasis on various Tory leaders, irresistibly bringing to mind the fixed behaviour patterns in the animal kingdom which result in the devotion of the herd to one leader, and the way in which failed leaders who have led the herd into trouble are quickly forgotten (only Mr Edward Heath seemed to be missing from the Tory TV commercial). The same herd behaviour seemed to be present later in the film, when it was explained that allowing the rich to keep their money only deprived the poor of a few pence a week each. I found myself calculating that the six or so females annexed as a perk of the system by the leader of the average caribou herd probably only cost the other males .01 females each.

The whole tone of the Tory commercial in fact reeked of the territorial imperative, from the collective acquisition of property so clearly pined for in the references to the days of Empire, to the individual obsession with property ownership and the acquisition of status within the herd.

But what I did find almost wholly missing from this Conservative Party Political Broadcast were any truly human attributes. Not a word about improving the health service, or race relations (where currently, herd instincts reign supreme, the white herd being terrified of being 'swamped' by a tiny, non-aggressive black herd). Instead, it was all conquest, acquisition, obsessive competitiveness, leader-worship – and the kind of chest-thumping that I believe African gorillas are rather better at than we humans.

Could it really be that the true difference between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party is that Labour's policies – however muddled and contradictory at times – are based on human needs and attitudes, and those of the Conservatives are based on the animal kingdom's instincts and reflexes? For their latest political broadcast certainly seems to say so.

L. CLARK

'Porthconan'
Middle Road
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Anti-Sex

Sir, I think that the picture of sex on television painted by Julian Barnes (NS 19 May) is no more than a reflection of the growing asceticism of the population at large.

The Anti-Sex League of 1984 is with us already. Today's young people think it's very sophisticated to have uttterly platonic relationships. Sex is for morons.

I blame it on the surfeit of education which we suffer from nowadays. People are so busy expanding their minds that they've forgotten that their bodies exist.

Pass the cider, Rosie! Oh, I forgot. You're a teetotaller.

REX HOORA

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When is a Charity not . . .

Sir, Chris Price (NS 12 May) makes a mistake in his observations on the Mansion House mental health campaign junket. He says that the NCCL is a charity. In fact, the NCCL is one of those organisations which is debarred from getting charitable status because of its political work. This has meant that the NCCL, like Release and a number of other organisations, has had to hive off of its acceptably 'charitable' work into separate organisations which can then obtain the various financial benefits that go with charitable status. It is a great pity that the Government does not seem interested in finding time to pass legislation that would erase the highly dubious distinctions imposed by antiquated charity laws and establish a new sort of financial status for voluntary organisations which would be more in line with public assumptions.

MARTIN KETTLE
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London WC1

Stress on Statistics

Sir, In his Westminster Diary (NS 12 May) Christopher Price trots out the well-known 'statistic' that 'one in nine men and one in six women will enter mental hospital at some time in their lives'. I have long been sceptical about this assertion; common observation would suggest it to be false, and a Professor of Psychiatry who made it in one isolated article has been unable to substantiate it for me. About a year ago I made enquiries at the NAMH and was shown a DHSS paper which I believe may have been the source, or *a* source, of the oft-quoted figure. From the context of this paper, *The Expectation of Being Admitted to a Mental Hospital or Unit* by Gerry B. Hill, MB, CHB, MSc, it is clear that the admissions-figures quoted in it include congenitally abnormal children and others destined to pass their lives in sheltered units, and also the senile old. In other words, the statistic produced is technically valid but tells one nothing about the real likelihood of mental breakdown and admission to hospital among what might be termed the ordinary population. Yet it is repeatedly cited by journalists and others with the implication that it relates to just this.

Obviously this correction does not affect Christopher Price's main point: that there is a need for more interest and investment in mental hospitals. Yes, but there is also a need for clarity on the subject. Vague, emotive references to 'a maladjusted industrial society' merely help, albeit unintentionally, to perpetrate the modish Laingian myth that mental hospitals are mainly populated by the victims of 'modern stress'. This is far from the truth.

GILLIAN TINDALL

27 Leighton Road
London
NW5

Eddie Linden

Sir, I am writing a memoir – to be published by Polytantric Press, 159 Wardour Street, W1 – on Eddie S. Linden, and would like to hear from anybody connected with his political, religious, or literary activities.

SEBASTIAN BARKER

24 Peter Street
London
W1

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BERNARD LEVIN, *The Times*

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Ernest Gellner

The Slopes of Certainty

Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry by BERNARD WILLIAMS *Harvester Press* £8.95 & *Penguin* £1.50

In the beginning there was Descartes. Descartes turned the world inside out. Before Descartes, knowing was a process in the world. After Descartes, the world became an event within knowledge. BD, men lived in a given world and indulged in diverse activities, such as making war, money, or love, and on occasion also indulged in the less colourful activity of acquiring knowledge. AD, you must know first and live after. What were the ideas through which he achieved this?

There was the acute distrust of the accidental collection of views found in any given culture at a given time, and the idea that the resulting cognitive predicament can be overcome by an entirely fresh start, thereby disconnecting oneself from past error, and that this is both mandatory and feasible. Michael Oakeshott has ironised this aspiration: 'With almost poetic fancy, he strives to live each day as if it were his first.' Professor Bernard Williams in his important study calls this the Project of the Pure Enquirer.

This makes Descartes the philosopher of the *coupure,* the decisive break in the cognitive history of mankind, deeper than any other intellectual revolution (though not necessarily condensed into any one event or even period) and marking the beginning of such cognitive salvation as may be available to us. Within the large corpus of inherited and untrustworthy opinion, there lies hidden a redoubt of uncontaminated, pure certainty, signalling wildly to be let out, if we can but find it. A purification, a quarantine can operate from this base. A cognitive *reconquista* can then be mounted from this base, which will restore unto us an entire habitable world, and which if properly conducted will not lead to a new infection. The location of this redoubt is in thought, self-consciousness, including doubt itself. But this must be read in the first person singular: it is the existence of my own thought, including my own doubt, which I cannot doubt. This makes Descartes the philosopher of cognitive individualism and inner-directedness. Crusoe rebuilt his world because he was shipwrecked. Descartes chose to simulate such a situation in thought, so as not to be beholden to outside and suspect sources in building his world. Thus he practised, within Catholicism, a kind of ultra-Protestantism, a sovereignty of consciousness rather than conscience.

But he thereby also became the philosopher of consciousness, whether or not packaged individually. Giving it a unique status, he became the theorist of mind-matter dualism. The redoubt had to be identified and its credentials verified. This was done by sustained doubt. Only one Cinderella could fit the very tight shoe of doubt designed by Descartes for that end. This makes him the philosopher of scepticism. But the quality to be revealed by this ordeal was certainty, and he is also the philosopher of certainty. The subsequent expansion from this bridgehead was also to be safe, without any retracing of steps, and this makes him the philosopher of the irreversible, deductive progression of knowledge (though Williams qualifies that conventional interpretation). The expansion is orderly and step by step. Things are done more safely if done one at a time. He was a stickler for order and tidiness, and his Rules of Method sound like a recipe for that style which according to Basil Bernstein dominates education and favours middle-class children. He was the prophet of middle-class tidy habits of thought and a Samuel Smiles of cognitive possessive individualism. He could not bear to be in cognitive debt and would trade only with capital he had personally acquired.

The world of the Cartesian is different from that of the non-Cartesian. Though it may contain God – as it does in Descartes' own version – He too may only be allowed in after prior examination. No one except the doubting ego has a right of citizenship by birth, nor escapes the humiliation of cognitive scrutiny. No one and nothing is above the Law of Knowledge. Though God holds an important position in Descartes' world, running a kind of cognitive central bank which underwrites all other operations, He too must submit to vetting before taking up His post. It is not so much, as Williams says, that the Pure Enquiry is a secular enterprise in a world with other options; it is an activity which must in the end make all other options secular too. The essence of religion is not so much transcendence or authority as making some substantive conviction ultimate and sovereign. Conversely, Descartes' elevation of epistemic criteria to a position of ultimate sovereignty eventually leads both to immanence and individualism.

Like the man who found giving up smoking easy, and did it frequently, philosophy finds it easy to refute Descartes with finality and does it every so often. The most virulent anti-Cartesians, perhaps, were the representatives of recent philosophic fashions in this country, who held most of his views not just erroneous but the very paradigms of error. So one looks forward to Williams's book with great expectations. Is there to be a confrontation, either with Descartes or with recent fashions?

On the surface, there is surprisingly little. Deeper down, the answer is complex. There are thinkers who throw away the ladder by which they have ascended, having first used it to the full; and there are others who throw away the ladder at the start, spurning to use that for which they cannot assume responsibility. Descartes of course is one of the latter. The bewildering thing about Williams is that he expounds him in a manner appropriate to the former. Descartes plunges us into the Valley of Doubt in order eventually to lead us up the sunny Slopes of Certainty. Williams does it the other way round, which really is putting Descartes before the horse. The irony is that, in the end, Williams descends deeper into the Valley of Doubt, if not of Despair, and in dead earnest, than Descartes ever did by way of thought-experiment. As I find the Valley of Doubt more interesting than the Pastures of Complacency, I like the later stages of Williams's arguments much better than the earlier ones. Whether those spring from some perverse principle of exposition, or come from some 14-year-old stratum of the book (the author gives us the archaeology of his own work), I cannot tell.

The ladder which Descartes throws away is the world itself. When a man tries to stand outside the world or at its edge, is it fair to confront him with all one's paraphernalia including the kitchen sink? This is what happens at first, and the Pure Enquiry seems to me misdescribed, in terms of singleness of motive (truth only) in one sphere. But is it not purity *from* cultural assumptions which really mattered? Apparently, at work he cares only about his 'truth-ratio', which sounds like a golf handicap, but he remains cosily commonsensical in his private life. He is told kindly that it is 'not an obviously absurd undertaking'. But it would seem to me that Descartes' discussion of his private morality and the conduct of life makes plain that all this is *par provision* only. He is not rude enough to say that life is to be left to the servants, but one does feel that the *Lebenswelt* is just a public convenience.

Happily, we soon leave behind this early version of Descartes, with his *idée fixe* about his batting average, otherwise full of sturdy commonsense (he really does sound like one of those 1950s philosophers), and move on to a more recognisable one. In one of the most interesting parts of the book, Williams sketches out the problem which really underlies the Project: knowledge is haunted by relativism. The very idea of knowledge assumes that there is something independent to be known. But what we know is affected by our cognitive apparatus. (Descartes thinks, therefore the daemon exists, you might say.) Of course we can try to find out about it, but that is just one further piece of knowledge, so how do we ever break out? Williams's general interpretation of Descartes is that this was what he was trying to do, by means of knowledge that was absolute (perspective-free) and hence certain. As Williams accepts this problem as perfectly genuine, there is no further need to patronise Descartes.

Williams admits that this formulation is slightly anachronistic (which indeed does not matter) in as far as it draws on later philosophers. But was Descartes really so worried by the perspectival quality of knowledge, as such? If diverse perspectives cohere,

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if they fit into a scheme which accounts for their diversity (though it is itself also perspectival), this on its own does not produce scepticism or the need for certainty. Many traditional belief systems have such a stratified view of knowledge, distributed among diverse segments of the population. Plato was happy with this. Or alternatively, perspectives don't matter too much if we all have the same one, as Kant thought.

What bothered Descartes was not perspectives as such, but the fact that some of them were so very dreadful. The great difficulty was simply – how can we be sure that our way is not just as dreadful? When dogmatic illusion abounds, *then* certainty becomes a precondition of having a world to call one's own at all. It is the cultural argument from illusion which makes it impossible to respect the conceptual *anciens régimes*. It is *this* which leads to the requirement that foundations be certain for once.

Descartes stood somewhere near the start of the great cognitive miracle, the Western *Wissenswunder*, and contributed to it and to its self-consciousness and codification. His work is a kind of Magna Carta of the commonwealth of cognition; however partial, incomplete and inadequate, it points the way to a civilised polity endowed with cognitive growth. He singled out the crucial differentia: henceforth, sovereignty, the entrenched constitutional law, lies not in content but in the manner of knowing.

There was nothing unrealistic or permanently life-separated, unworldly, about the Project. Imagine the president of some great republic, suspecting that his main intelligence agency pursues its own policies, inimical to himself. He can appoint someone to look into the matter. But if the rot has gone far enough, how can he trust that appointee? How indeed. If the rot has gone far enough, he must start the job himself, and sack the lot. That was what Descartes did to his own ideas.

In the 20th century, most cultures are in a Cartesian condition. Those which have been in it long enough live under his rules of cognitive morality. This does not mean that everything they believe can be deduced from the rules of enquiry or the principle of individual scrutiny. It only means that whatever persistently defies these twin sovereigns gradually loses claims to respect. (Democracy is similar: policies do not emanate from the general will, but cannot persistently defy it.) We are all Cartesians now.

So is Williams. The most fascinating part of the volume are the tantalisingly condensed, profoundly intriguing, highly elliptical and occasionally obscure final six paragraphs, giving us what is presumably a sketch of Williams's own world. It is patently the fruit of three centuries of Cartesian pruning and self-examination. It is a new *Lebenswelt*, a world to live and think in, not a piece of speculation detachable from the thinker's identity. And what has happened in it, for instance, to the Cartesian dualism of mind and matter? From two substances to the Two Cultures, you might say. Matter remains the object of the natural sciences and an absolute, non-perspectival vision, in the light of the 'intercultural success' of science, but the absoluteness is now, plausibly, divorced from certainty, and we hold on to it 'rather grimly'. But the world of mind, philosophy, the social sciences, lacks both certainty and absoluteness, and in it everything may be 'liable to radical indeterminacy of interpretation'. Thus private pains, aches, twinges, philosophy, and the social sciences, all end up in the same realm. I always feared as much.

But if all this is so, note how strongly justified Descartes was in his doubt. If all this is so, none of those conceptual *anciens régimes* could be right, either in what they said or in the confident way they said it. They too offered a unified picture of man and nature, which therefore is no 'positivist fantasy'. Positivism assimilated man to nature; they did it the other way round. But if they were all wrong, then *a fortiori*, a philosophy which would endorse them because they were a 'form of life' must itself be wrong. All this seems implicit in Williams's conclusion, but it is not underscored. I have heard Descartes accused of refraining from spelling out conclusions in the hope that readers would tumble to them. Does the Inquisition stalk the Moral Sciences Club?

Peter Conrad

Pregnantly Private

The Oxford Book of Oxford edited by Jan Morris *Oxford* £5.95
Oxford by JAN MORRIS *Oxford* £6 & £2.50

Jan *née* James Morris and Oxford are both national monuments (or rather embodiments of the national problem), and there is an implicit analogy between them. Both exemplify the introversion, even the intromission, of a subsiding England. Oxford likes to fancy itself as a benign internment camp for pedantic loons, and this view of it is given credence by *The Oxford Book of Oxford*. The volume's very title bespeaks the narcissism of the place and it is a narcissism like Jan Morris's own. Her sex-change solemnises (she believes) a reunion inside herself of the opposites which nature elsewhere incites to antagonism. Love is no longer the enjoyment of an existence other than one's own, but the surgical excavation of that complementary sexual identity inside oneself. Love has retracted into hermaphroditic self-love. Jan's genital transmogrification is an Oxford story: James was living there at the time, and merely transferred to his hapless body the self-absorption which is the spirit of the place.

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Jan Morris's Oxford is umbilical: she calls it the navel of England. The purpose of her operation was to refine a tiresomely extruding and extroverted phallus into the likeness of a navel, a supplementary aid to self-contemplation. Oxford has always been an enemy of the erectile: Matthew Arnold noticed that even the spires are limply dreamy. As Tom Harrisson puts it in *The Oxford Book of Oxford*,

> Oxen (and Oxewomen) are the worst and most inefficient sexual units I have ever known . . . Sex has become supra-mental rather than physico-mental. Masturbation is dominant.

Oxford is a village which imagines itself a world. James Morris was a man of the world who has recoiled, as Jan Morris, into the cosy protection of local pieties. James Morris shinned up Everest; Jan Morris chronicles the loss of the British Empire, and has retreated to live in a Welsh fastness, commissioning her tombstone from a local artisan. Oxford has suffered a similar self-consoling retrenchment, and apologises for its present shame by enumerating its past glories. Hence the anthology which Jan Morris has been engaged to edit. The selections are funny and recondite, but the emphasis is on an Oxford which passes off its ineffectualness as treasurable eccentricity and its inability to compete as an automatic, effortless superiority. Jan Morris's favoured characters in *The Oxford Book of Oxford* are a parade of deviants who in any other society would be scabrous outlaws: the fellow of Magdalen who in 1507 baptised cats and practised witchcraft, the swinish gourmandising parson Woodforde scoffing roast udders, Dean Gaisford with his odious humbuggery.

The book is valuable not for these twice-told tales but for its occasional deployment of literary sources. The inmates of the place can't get beyond self-admiring self-caricature, but literary outsiders have often imaginatively transformed it. Oxford can be seen in the course of the anthology adapting itself to each new literary generation. The 18th-century imagination appraises it either as a society of absurd pretence – Boswell was depressed by its 'old young men without vivacity', Fanny Burney grimaced at the slavering obeisance the academics offered to George III – or as a landscape of picturesque decrepitude: Pope hermetically burrowed into its dusky libraries as if ensconced in his grotto at Twickenham, Walpole found there the monkish scenario for a Gothic novel. The Romantics empty Oxford of its inhabitants in order to make it a theatre of mental fantasy: Wordsworth, briefly unfaithful to Cambridge, imagines himself 'an eager Novice robed in fluttering gown', and Lamb admits to preferring Oxford in the vacation when he can act any part he pleases in its vacant streets. The Victorians make Oxford a shrine of doctrinal authority: Burne-Jones's medieval toy-town, Ruskin's socialist millenium of dignified labour (in the Hinksey road project), Arnold's sanctuary of lost causes.

Lewis Carroll discovered in Oxford that desiccated excess of logic which generates nonsense, so that his *Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry* led directly to *Alice in Wonderland*. Henry James found there a demonstration of that theory of the cerebral leisure class on which his novels depend: hence his admiration for the otiose institution of All Souls, or his remark that 'vaguely-generous youth' in the New College garden sprawl 'bookishly on the turf as if to spare it the injury of their boot-heels'. For modern writers, Oxford has soured into a corrupt dystopia. Auden's poem describes it as a city of accidie. Even the buildings are slothful, 'utterly/Satisfied still with their weight'. Lawrence decried the smug languor of its vocal inflections, and Graham Greene spent his time there drinking coffee in the Cadena and planning espionage.

Because Jan Morris regards the discarded, dismembered James Morris as a separate creature, she prints an excerpt from his *Oxford* in her anthology, and even acknowledges the permission he has given her to quote from him. But she has also revised and up-dated his book, which first appeared in 1965, to make it her own. In doing so, she has obliquely adjusted Oxford to her new self. Since the first edition, she has become trans-sexual and Oxford colleges have become co-residential: now there are 'some for men, some for women, some for both'. Oxford, she reports, 'has lately been feminised'; so has she. The original account of Oxford stresses its ornery divisiveness, its internecine jealousies, as if the institution were meant to represent that vicious duality in nature from which Jan Morris claims her mutation has given her personal indemnity. Accordingly, her new Oxford is intricately feminine, a place physically ventilated 'with hidden entries and back gates and annexes and enclaves', secret as maidenhead. The collegiate atmosphere is called 'pregnantly private'.

Women have 'fertilised and mellowed' or 'fructified' an institution which was formerly starkly masculine. But they have not yet redeemed Jan Morris's own college, Christ Church, which is procrastinating about the issue of co-residence. A special obloquy is therefore visited on Christ Church, which Jan Morris now finds oppressively male, rowdy and redolent of cigar-smoke. Her preferred imaginative home is Magdalen, which is 'matriarchal – a setting for some voluptuous chatelaine'. Christ Church has, however, recently made a symbolic gesture of repudiation which pleases Jan Morris: it has dis-assembled its 'old organ . . . one of the two or three finest in Europe'. She reports that a new one has replaced it, but she need not despair: the transplant hasn't happened yet.

Even her architectural rhapsody has exchanged dreary genital sexuality for gobbling oral pleasures: Jan Morris (who in *Conundrum* descanted on the eroticism of *mille-feuilles* pastries) calls a Pembroke quad a caramel, the boathouses meringues, and compares a leper hospital to the aphrodisiac taste of oysters. And the Shelley memorial is exposed as an icon of sexual reversal. From the front it is a seraphic youth, but from behind it looks 'plump-buttocked, supposedly proving that its model was a girl'. Sidesaddle on the fence, Jan Morris merely observes that 'from the front, it looks to me rather beautiful'.

John Sturrock

Gentlemen v. Players

English Cricket by CHRISTOPHER BROOKES
Weidenfeld £5.50

In one of his anthropological books Claude Lévi-Strauss has a diagram of the lay-out of a Bororo Indian village, deep in the moist and matted backlands of Brazil. The native huts are set comfortably in a circle, to right and left of a central axis and equidistant from the 'men's hut' in the middle. You belong to one or other tribal moiety according to which side of this imaginary line you sleep; one side is reserved for the 'feeble', the other for the 'strong'.

Those readers of Lévi-Strauss who are also students of cricket will remark at once that what the Structuralist c-in-c, or structuralissimo, has really drawn is not the map of an aboriginal hutment but a guide to the field placings traditional in a John Player league match when the batting side needs 30 runs to win and there are only two overs of parsimonious medium pace to go.

The simple homes of the Bororo are so many fieldsmen pulled providently back equidistant from the wicket, or 'men's hut', so as to stop fours being scored; and the imaginary line which separates the 'feeble' from the 'strong' is that other imaginary line that divides the cricket field in two, into 'off' and 'on'. The fact that the Oval, on a Sunday evening in summer, should patently represent the carbon copy of a clearing in the Brazilian rain-forest is further proof, moreover, of Lévi-Strauss's universalist thesis, which holds that, wherever you care to look, the constructions of the human mind are akin.

'Off' and 'on' are every bit as influential and loaded a pair of terms in cricket as 'feeble' and 'strong' are among the Bororo – except that, as a Bororo, if you are a 'feeble' you must marry a 'strong', and vice versa: a rule for which I have not so far come across any close equivalent among cricketers. 'Off' is the good side of the cricket pitch, the cultural side; 'on' is the bad, or natural side. The grandest, most exquisite of batting strokes is the off-drive, hard to make because it means moving the limbs into a thoroughly unnatural position; the lowest of strokes, by contrast, is the artless hoick to leg, easily effected for being quite untutored. Stigmatised by the better kind of cricket-watchers as 'cow'-shots, such lubberly efforts are a throwback to this noble and elaborate game's bucolic origins. The off side is likewise where you will see the more lissom, godlike fielders perform, commanding the open spaces of the covers; the other side is for the plodders and the hard of bending, bumpkins earmarked by nature to field at mid-on and who need not expect to look at the batsman's face, only at his behind.

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This line, which divides culture so snobbishly from nature in cricket, once divided the game's players too – into amateurs and professionals. One of the most suggestive things I learned from reading Christopher Brookes's class-conscious book was that in the middle of the 19th century amateurs expected to do the batting but certainly not the bowling, a demeaning business which they shuffled off on to the pros. The batsman was the master, the bowler his servant. This had much logic to it. Batting was the individual thing and spectacular, and entailed only brief, occasional departures from the attitudes of languor appropriate to the ruling class; bowling, which wasn't then the skill it later became, was anonymous and a chore – the part of the game it was eventually thought could be automated, although the bowling machines that were built were a flop. This division lasted in cricket: there were always far more amateur batsmen of quality playing than there were amateur bowlers – although gentlemen did come to specialise in leg-breaks and googlies, that conspicuously wasteful, bohemian form of bowling which, Lévi-Straussians should note, causes the ball to deviate from the on to the off side of the wicket.

Christopher Brookes himself steps on to the field of play through the professionals' gate. He is a doctor of sociology and writes a functional prose that is clearly meant as a rebuff to the Carduses, Arlotts and other peacocks of the press-box whose mandarin reports are tarred with the same elitism as the whole amateur tradition. *English Cricket* is likely to be the only book published this year to contain the names of Max Weber and P. G. Wodehouse as adjacent entries in the bibliography. Brookes has read up the social history of cricket, such as it is, and does his best to match that particular social history to English social history in general. But the archives for the formative years of cricket are thin, and none too explicit, and he proceeds more by hopeful juxtaposition than by conclusive argument: first the crushing generalisation – this is how society was at such and such a time – then a quick look at the contemporary organisation of the game, inviting us to appreciate the resemblance. Where the facts aren't to be had, Brookes offers hunches instead. His story, which is one of the passage of cricket from anarchic medieval romp to a newly Packerised public entertainment, hangs together all right, but it is too rapidly told to count as definitive history.

Brookes has the welfare of the paid players at heart. He is now a Senior Research Officer at the Department of Employment, and if he has one foot on the greensward the other is firmly planted in the Job Centre. He harps on the economics of a cricketer's life, and the ways in which for so long professionals were exploited – the unimaginative swells of the MCC come badly out of his account of 19th-century arrangements in the game. Oddly, he never compares what happened in this country with what has happened in other, less class-ridden ones, in Australia or the West Indies; even more oddly, he nowhere refers to the ideas of C. L. R. James, a player of cricket, a lover of cricket, and a marxist, who has had many intelligently radical things to say about the ideologies of the game in his time.

English Cricket ends as – given its main drift – it had to, with a tug of the forelock to Kerry Packer, who has brought much new money into cricket, either directly as a patron or indirectly as a nasty threat whom others are keen to scotch with pre-emptive bounties of their own. Brookes is wary, however; he quickens his pace to avoid the question of whether what is good for the pros, or some of them, is good for the game. The prognathous Kerry may be turning the clock back not on, by aping (as it were) the chinless, titled impresarios of the 18th century, who raised teams of mercenaries for their own greater glory and for however many guineas they chose to wager on the result. A year or two hence we may all be glumly sitting outside the Ladbroke's tent watching the histrionics of Packer's World Superstars XI at play against XXII of Middlesex, and cricket will be back where it started.

Jeremy Treglown

Going Nowhere

The Most of S. J. Perelman *Eyre Methuen* £7.50

Eastward Ha! by S. J. PERELMAN *Eyre Methuen* £3.95

On his day, and most of those days were between 1930 and 1950, there was no American columnist to touch Perelman. His *New Yorker* pieces were distinctively New York – metropolitan, scornful, literate – but at the same time both self-deprecating and almost clownishly robust. His favourite kind of gag, in fact, is a verbal clownery, a physically enacted, literal misreading of a cliché or a metaphor: 'I mopped my forehead with a red banana (I found out later it should have been a red bandanna)'; 'Diana turned on the radio. With a savage snarl the radio turned on her.' And most of his funniest pieces involve humiliating physical action – going to the dentist, being fitted for contact lenses, feeling seasick – of a kind that lets him exaggerate, intensify or compress, sometimes sprawling recklessly in his own discomfiture, sometimes glossing it over in a self-mocking ellipsis: 'I had some difficulty getting the beans out of the can, but I shortly contrived a serviceable bandage for my wrist'; 'I hurl the refuse into the pit with a single deft sprain of the back.'

What animates these one-liners is the fantasticality of Perelman's imagination, stimulated by some actual minor absurdity. Dorothy Parker, in her brief introduction to the anthology first published in 1959 and now reissued, said that a humorist must have 'a disciplined eye and a wild mind'. Perelman, who wrote scripts for the Marx Brothers, certainly had the second of these, whether parodying a medical journalist's remedy for thumb-sucking with his own

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idea, Swiftian in its extremity ('tie a Mills grenade to the baby's thumb with cobbler's waxed thread'), or writing about a trip to Hollywood as if it were itself a feature film: '"What is it Jenkin?" Violet called anxiously through the speaking-tube to the chauffeur (played by Lyle Talbot).'

His eye has always been less good (though he described its appearance in a contact lens with memorable vividness – 'in profile I had the melancholy grandeur of a carp at Fontainebleau'), and for this reason alone the travel writing he contributed to *Holiday* magazine is comparatively dull. The first collection of these pieces was *Westward Ha!*, a jogging post-war globe-trot from LA via the East to Europe and Britain. *Eastward Ha!*, obviously enough, goes round the other way.

It's easy but unavoidable to say that Perelman has simply never had the staying power for a book-sized book (*Eastward Ha!* is actually only 126 pages of big type). His best writing is a sprint, lunging from joke to joke like a Manhattan cab between sets of traffic lights. Over a longer distance he lurches in the same way, but without so many jokes. *Westward Ha!* has its moments – partly because the travelling is done by sea and few comic writers can fail with a purser's list and a storm or two – but even here, presumably because he was working for a magazine conscious of its advertising, he veers erratically between insult and rather wet compliment. He feels he must say how excellent the ship's crew is, how impressively the post-war administration is coping in Italy, how beautiful he finds Bangkok. But the response that keeps breaking through is more characteristically seen-it-all: 'we could have had all this in the Bronx for a five cent subway ride.'

So too, but more so, with *Eastward Ha!*. It's an old man's book, as lecherous as the interviews Groucho Marx gave in his dotage (Perelman's first chapter is called 'Looking for Pussy'; air-hostesses figure prominently) and as meanderingly anecdotal as an old man is entitled to be. The entitlement doesn't make it any more enjoyable, of course. James Thurber, Elizabeth Taylor, W. Somerset Maugham – the names of his friends spill out, the point of the story gets lost. Once in a while there's a twitch of the old manic energy, but such moments seem hard-won and for the most part the gags are sadly laboured: schoolboy jokes on foreign names ('Phee line Miaow, the Siamese room boy'), clichés about the tight-fisted Scots and the cat-eating Chinese. Most dispiriting, though, and most predictable on the evidence of *Westward Ha!* is the fact that Perelman – unlike, say, Maugham or Waugh – doesn't *go* anywhere, really, and in consequence sees nothing. His route is the standard tourist route and his reactions are the appropriate ones: 'The gardens are a delight to the spirit . . .', 'the variety of wares in the colourful bazaar outstanding'. He does the standard tourist things, too. In Edinburgh he takes 'a dram of Glenfiddich'; in Paris he calls up a hooker he once knew; everywhere he complains about the tourists.

It all makes a melancholy contrast with the cliché-bashing young columnist who parodied the aristocratic travelogue style in parts of 'Strictly from Hunger' ('The innocent squeals of the policemen as the small blackamoors pinched them were irrestible'), and who generally took on every American myth he could find – predicting a day, for example, when a young couple would find an old farmhouse and *not* buy it and do it up, or imagining a salesman who aggressively admits his lack of faith in his product. All these pieces are in *The Most of S. J. Perelman*. Perhaps it's time to change that word to *Best*.

Neal Ascherson

Scratch It

No Mean Fighter by HARRY MCSHANE and JOAN SMITH *Pluto Press* £7.50 and £2.95

A revolutionary is entitled to a short life. Most revolutions, from the French to the Bolshevik, have recognised this claim in full. In less generous times, when guillotine and Gulag are not on free prescription, revolutionaries often just burn out and spend the second half of their lives in less exacting ways. But this isn't so much treachery as biology. There is a good case for judging radical leaders only on their radical period; men and women often give all they have to contribute to a struggle within a very few years. The long coda of compromise shouldn't obliterate what went before.

Harry McShane, however, has declined to draw on his rights. Now in his eighties, he has refused to burn out. Yet even on the short-life principle of mercy, the human debris of Scotland's revolutionary movements in this century makes a gruesome sight. Harry McShane still speaks at Right-To-Work rallies and John Maclean commemorations, and he is close to the Socialist Workers' Party. But where are his old comrades? They became Glasgow town councillors, or trade-union bureaucrats, or Stalinist See-Threepios. Or they took that lonesome train southwards to the Labour backbenches at Westminster, whence no workers' champion returns but strangely transformed. There they rotted, some into pathetic or drunken bores, others into Moral Rearmers or – like Davie Kirkwood – into clowns shouting in an affectedly thick accent that 'the backbone of the Scottish worker is his love of simple porridge'. But they all had their hour once, even though they must sometimes have envied the Scottish revolutionaries who fell when they were still fighting, like John Maclean from prison maltreatment, or James Rutherford by Franquist bullet.

Harry McShane, in contrast, never ran out of that political virility. He stands now much where he began: a believer in 'workers' self-action', an enemy of parliaments, a revolutionary who accepts the need for an organisation or party so long as it treats the working class as creative human beings rather than an economic force. In order to remain there, he has of course quarrelled – usually at the right moment, but sometimes too early (John Maclean) and sometimes much too late (the Communist Party) – with a long list of institutions.

He was a Catholic engineering apprentice, a rare sort of bird in Glasgow, and his first quarrel was with his own Church. After vain attempts to find a niche for Christian socialism, he quit. He was a regular at the continuous festival of moral and political debate which ran in Glasgow, on the Green or in the theatres and halls, through the years before 1914. He learned to mistrust those respectable Freemason foremen in the yards, and when he joined the ILP he was soon rejecting the leadership of the equally respectable engineers (the Clyde Workers' Committee, at the height of the wartime 'twopence-an-hour' or anti-dilution strikes, would meet clad in blue suits and bowler hats, with rolled umbrellas).

McShane was a founder-member of the British Socialist Party in 1911, but soon began to back off when Hyndman and Quelch brought in their followers from the Social-Democratic Party, snuffing parliamentarism and eventually sickened by Hyndman's support for the war. Leaving the BSP in 1920, he joined John Maclean and became one of his five wandering disciples, the 'Tramp Trust Unlimited', which preached the revolutionary gospel across industrial Scotland. Maclean, in his life, passion and death, was a man disconcertingly like Jesus (if one can imagine Jesus as Lenin's first consul in Glasgow), and there is a Peterish sadness in Harry McShane's

Erich Fried

ERICH FRIED

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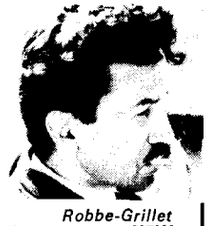
ROBBE-GRILLET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GAMBIT — International Theatre Review GAMBIT 32 (£1.25) concentrates on the work of Steven Berkoff, including manifestos, photos and his adaptation of Kafka's **Metamorphosis**, together with an essay by Ionesco and many other articles and reviews. New in paperback are a revised edition of Berkoff's **EAST & OTHER PLAYS** (£2.25) and Howard Barker's 2 plays **STRIPWELL and CLAW** (£3.25).

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account of how he broke with the master and joined the Communists. But here again he was correcting his course: McShane learned from John Maclean's isolation that everything is writing on sand unless some institution or structure arises to preserve it.

As a Communist, McShane put his energies into the National Unemployed Workers' Campaign, with Wal Hannington. Both men conspired to keep the party's big thumbs off the NUWC as far as possible, and ran the marches their own way. But it was not until the early Fifties, and the adoption of parliamentarism by the CPGB with the 'British Road to Socialism', that McShane made his next break. In his own way, he was rejecting the Stalinism which he had tolerated so long: to Harry McShane, 'the British Road' was simply Stalin using the weakest and most subservient party as a lever to overturn socialist policies.

His wife once said to him, when they were broke and facing eviction, that her stomach was scratched from toast with nothing on it. Harry McShane has scratched a few stomachs on his way through, and hardly anyone, save Wal Hannington and Maclean, escapes his contempt. He has been in jail, fought many evictions (but not his own), survived great riots like Glasgow's George Square in 1919 and the nights of violence across the city in October 1931. He has taken part in many of the stupid, vicious quarrels and humiliations which recur in Scottish politics of the Left to this day. Anyone who remembers the Labour special conference of 1974, when the Scottish party was booted and bludgeoned into accepting devolution by its English masters at Transport House, will read with ugly fascination Harry McShane's account of how precisely the same thing was done to the Scottish committee of the CP in 1937. We have ways of making you govern yourself . . .

There is plenty to disagree with. McShane is not strong on political speculation of a neo-marxist kind; the SNP are just tartan Tories, 'working-class power cannot be won through a capitalist parliament', and that is that. The narrative is more the point. It is a co-production, with Joan Smith assembling and editing McShane's taped recollections and answers. But McShane's own pugnacity and wit, and his unfailing sense of class not just in the abstract but in the boots or the collars, come through in triumph.

This English

Someone sent us a misprint the other day – not our sort of thing really, but good enough to pass on. It came in The Times **radio listings: '11.30, Toady in Parliament'. Elsewhere, people were making fools of themselves without the aid of the gremlins. A marvellous dangler (what has Miss Moorehead been doing in Sir Victor's house these 20 years?), and two nob's pronouns from our friends over at the** Listener. **Oh, and a cute near-homophone. Paste entries on a postcard.**

☐ Having spent almost every hour of the last 20 years in and around [V. S. Pritchett's] house, you feel that there is not one inch of garden or corner of painting which he has not paused before and pondered over. **Caroline Moorehead** *The Times* (C. H. Rolph)

☐ Vanessa Redgrave had to run the gamut of protesters . . . **Nigel Rees** *Today Programme Radio 4* (I. F. R. Rommes)

☐ Yes, everything comes to he who waits. **David Wheeler** *Listener* (Harvey Cree)

☐ I had to keep turning back to the photograph rather than the text to follow who was whom. **Clancy Sigal** *Listener* (Malcolm R. Jackson)

Maurice Richardson

The Bear-Hug

The Russian Mind by RONALD HINGLEY *Bodley Head* £5.50

You remember the effect on Pushkin of reading *Dead Souls*: 'Oh, Russia, Russia!' he said, and he beat his head against the wall. What is the reason for this familiar reaction of tragi-comic despair? Possibly something to do with all those contradictions. The opposites in the Russian mentality do not interpenetrate; they stick out like the ends of a fracture. (The same is true to a lesser extent of the Irish and the Spanish.) The Russian manages to be broad, generous, reckless, narrow, mean, calculating – not in fits and starts but all at once. This explains a lot, including his habit of choking people with hospitality, the bear's death-hug.

Ronald Hingley, who, as University Lecturer in Russian at Oxford, has the great advantage of knowing that marvellously flexible signalling system, the Russian language, has written an entertaining essay. It's a bit superficial, perhaps, a dragonfly's eyeview, rather thin on the scientific side, yet you can learn a good deal from it. All discussions of national characteristics make one's head spin, and Russian history is unusually disorderly by our neat island standards. Imagine having the Tatars as one's scourge for half a millenium and occupying Devon and Cornwall until late in the 18th century. Marx said: 'The bloody mire of Mongol slavery . . . forms the cradle of Muscovy, and modern Russia is but a metamorphosis of Muscovy.' Then there is the extra complication of distinguishing between traits that are Russian and those that are Soviet. Spotting traditional patterns reappearing in a communist setting becomes a point-scoring game; sometimes I feel Mr Hingley forgets to give the Russians marks for charm.

Pre-revolutionary literature is a very rich source. Dostoevsky, 'that treasure-house of national social psychopathology', as Bleuler called him, provides a fine gallery of grotesques who turn out to be national types. One of his specialities is the malign buffoon, like Lebedev. ('"Oh, I am base, base," said Lebedev, and he beat his head against the wall, "and vile as well", he added as an afterthought.') Old Père Karamazov is the king of this tribe; Hingley descries an affinity here with Khrushchev.

Sealed lips, excessive secrecy, the habit of compulsive undercommunication, which is the opposite of the exhibitionist tendency to overcome the personality, have all been remarked on by early visitors to Russia. There are several precedents for non-events and non-persons. For some time after Ivan the Terrible's homicidal *oprichnina* had been wound up in 1572, the mere mention of them was a capital offence. The assassination of the mad Emperor Paul I (the occasion for Madame de Staël's crack: 'Russia is a despotism tempered by strangulation') in 1801, and the Decembrist revolt in 1825, were non-events for many years. The ripest recent Soviet specimen was the authorities' refusal to inform the public about Nixon's complicity in Watergate.

A curious Russian trait is *Vranyo*, which can be described as the habit of boastfully prevaricating oneself into a state of trance. Gogol's itinerant clerk who gets mistaken for the Government Inspector is a fine exponent of *Vranyo*. My favourite Soviet example is the Superintendent of the Leningrad mental hospital who, in 1932, was asked by a visiting American psychiatrist, Dr Frankwood E. Williams, to show him a case of depression. He told him that so high was the standard of mental health in the new Soviet society that depression as a clinical entity had ceased to exist. Another interesting, traditionally picaresque, psychiatric angle on communist party politics was revealed by Zhdanov, making his report to the 18th Party Congress in March 1939. It seemed that, in terror of the Purge, certain

The place of race

Do newspapers and mass media sensationalise race relationships for headlines' sake?

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party members had been getting certificates from a Kiev psychiatrist: 'Owing to the condition of his mental health Comrade so-and-so is not fit to be used as a tool by any class enemy.'

There are various animadversions on the role of the intelligentsia, from its narcissistic preoccupation with itself to its mutation into the obsessional racist revolutionary, Lenin, a very unslavonic blend of intellectual and man of action. Chekhov features as the most striking prophet of bureaucratic horror. 'Russia will one day be ruled by such toads and crocodiles as were unknown even in Spain under the Inquisition' was his most dire forecast.

Precisely how this amalgam of contradictions, servility and individuality, group consciousness and anarchism, submissiveness and courage, has coalesced into a Soviet Russian mind, we are left to speculate. But Mr Hingley does realise that, however much truth there is in *plus ça change*, it is only relative; change is the absolute. *Homo sovieticus* seems to be growing more like his disciplined, methodical, scientific German opposite, with which 19th-century observers, from Dostoevsky and Leskov to Curzon, often contrasted him. Meanwhile permissive, anarchistic Western man – suggests Hingley, taking a leaf from Solzhenitsyn – is becoming ominously like the old Russian intelligentsia on the eve . . .

Tom Paulin

Antimatter

Beloved Son by GEORGE TURNER *Faber* £4.95
Promised Land by KAREL SCHOEMAN translated by Marion V. Friedmann *Julian Friedmann* £3.50
Altered States by PADDY CHAYEFSKY *Hutchinson* £3.95
Change and Decay in All Around I See by ALLAN MASSIE *Bodley Head* £4.50

Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.

Curiously, Lyte's crepuscular hymn is invoked by two of this week's novelists, while Karel Schoeman and Paddy Chayefsky also join voices in a congregation of doom-watchers. The shades of evening are falling on our secular tomorrows, the only future is the decaying now.

After 40 years in space the first interstellar expedition comes home and the men of the late 1980s confront the youth culture of the 21st century. Albert Raft's team of astronauts look wryly at a hedonistic utopia of clone-brothers, behaviourist psychologists and underground biologists. It's a sunny and efficient world of steely trimmers where almost everyone is under 30: 'so much competence, but so much youth without a tradition', muses the ageing Security Ombudsman before being blown to pieces by a mob of rioting clones. And what *Beloved Son* is essentially concerned with is the danger of genetic experiment, 'the power latent in a process of endless, controlled duplication'. Once the geneticists are allowed to release that power they can create regiments of group-indoctrinated, uncomplaining serfs who believe that 'everybody's replaceable, it's the race that matters'. And as Raft looks round at the people of the 2020s, he discovers that he's caught in a generation gap of vast proportions. No one understands 'the reactions of an outmoded, impractical, emotion-guided intellect'. His mind needs some delicate re-tuning: memory channels have to be repressed, emotional centres rebalanced, and childhood traumas short-circuited.

George Turner is consistently witty and intelligent in his depiction of outmoded starmen blundering through the brave new world of Australasia, 'all Earth itself lost in the paradoxes of time dilation and slow metabolism'. And often his prose has a lyrical and energetic wonder, as when Raft gazes from the windows of a plastic barracks at 'soft stars in familiar constellations, in clear air lovelier than the diamond dust fields of space'. But the form of Turner's novel, like Raft himself, is too much of a baggy monster at odds with a bright efficiency – the narrative tends to sprawl in places and this sometimes makes the story-line seem oddly precarious and absent-minded. Nevertheless, this is a compelling and often brilliant fiction.

Karel Schoeman's novella is also set in the future: a young Afrikaner returns, like Raft, to the society he left years before. There have been huge, unexplained changes, the rich and prominent have cleared out and left the white farmers to scratch a meagre living from 'a dull deserted land'. Some have been driven away from their farms 'like dogs', others plot against the shadowy state and so the police appear periodically and beat them up. But who are the police? Are they black or white? Are they members of a UN peacekeeping force? Unfortunately we're not told, though what we are meant to do is to cast a sympathetic glance at the future of white South Africa. Schoeman writes with a fragile self-pity and a certainly earnest humility, but even the most saintly liberal is bound to shrug off such a peculiar solicitation of his concern. The present realities of South Africa are brutally evident and any thought of the whites being exiled in 'the back-rooms and attics of strange cities, struggling with the syllables of alien languages' seems impossibly sentimental. And anyway we know that there's a welcome waiting for them in Bolivia.

If Schoeman reveals something of his countrymen's deepest anxieties, Paddy Chayefsky's often exciting story of an experiment in genetic regression exposes some of the doubts that must occasionally strike even the most confident American achiever. Edward Jessup is a psycho-physiologist with 'an extraordinary if monomaniacal mind'. His wife suspects that her coldly passionate husband may be a genius (he wants a Nobel Prize fast) and she eagerly abets him in his search for his 'true self' which he believes is 'a real, mensurate, quantifiable thing'. After numerous descents into the black waters of an isolation tank he at last succeeds in regressing into a small, hairy, proto-human creature that eats gazelles in the university park and experiences 'the primal unity'. Like a miniature King Kong he smashes his way out of the laboratory and exults in the taste of warm blood: 'He finally got it off with God. He finally embraced the Absolute, was finally ravished by Truth.' Unlike Faustus, he doesn't so much go forward in that famous art as travel back into a state of noble savagery. What Chayefsky is really offering is a parable of authenticity in which he explores his doubts about that 'arctic passion' which drives Jessup towards the black spaces of his real self.

In the end Jessup struggles out of the void of self-exploration, recognises his responsibilities as a civilised human being, and in a rather Blakean passage saves his wife from the 'shapeless antimatter' that threatens to engulf her. Naturally, she's grateful for being saved from the final, arctic desolation of her husband's soul: Jessup has turned from pig into ape into man, a curious evolution, but one which is scarcely unusual. It's an old moral as the young, the beautiful, the brave discover that high IQs and top grades aren't everything, and in a tense conclusion Chayefsky lets them neatly off the hook.

Allan Massie's comic tale of moral decay in central London involves a reasonably engaging drunkard called Atwater who likes a breakfast of brandy, Bass and kipper paté. There's some pleasantly wispy dialogue as he bumps into various comic nuts like Dr Ngunga who 'tiptoed over the roofs of London, nimble as a chamois'. Everyone is permanently drunk, and the story resembles one of those hangovers that deepen towards noon: stray fragments of conversation, strange tastes and smells, bizarre quotations coagulate in the pained skull as the world fades into a paranoid phantasmagoria where Dr Ngunga and psychiatrists from Leighton Buzzard entangle themselves in Fieldingesque epic similes. The prose is tortured by remembered lines of poetry: a thin dawn breaks blankly, the fog rubs its back on the window pane, a samphire gatherer lurches through Brighton and the moon shines on the laburnum trees of Woking: 'He'd read about it somewhere before.' Occasionally a joke gurgles out of this mulch of decaying sense, but trying to read it with a clear head is like being invited to share someone else's crapulence.

Geoffrey Grigson

Names of Love

In private names of affection
Abnormals are the norm.
Love's names take expectedly
The unexpected form.

That Swan of Avon, for instance,
When Anne his wife came in,
And nobody was near them,
First kissed her lily-white chin,

Then said 'Good morrow, Rat Shit,'
And it didn't upset his wife,
Aware that such onomastics
Squared love and disgust of life.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Julian Barnes

Bitch, Bitch, Bitch

'The British writers really are the best in the world,' declared the Chairman of Thames TV to the members of the Writers' Guild of Great Britain during *Pye Colour Television Awards* (Thames); and from the assembled British writers and their guests arose some sleepily self-celebrating applause. Who, amid the wine-sodden bonhomie of a Dorchester lunch, would bitch at praise from an employer? Russell Harty, presenting Geraldine McEwan with one of the engraved car headlamps on offer that evening, agreed with glistening sincerity: 'I think it's very important that we in television write to each other and tell each other when we like each other and love each other.'

Fair – if soppy – enough, and let Harty fire off affectionate internal memos to the end of his boundless generosity; but do we need to have these rituals televised? To have Robert Morley as compere, stagily fluttering his hands like a bucolic auctioneer? To have Max Bygraves insolently toasting 'the ladies' with a joke about Vanessa Redgrave failing to get a taxi in Golders Green? To have actors purring with the self-delight which the profession so inefficiently conceals? Though the evening was billed as paying 'tribute to the unsung stars of the small screen – the scriptwriters', only half the awards seemed to go to penmen: perhaps because they are such rotten after-lunch speakers, mostly ducking away from the mike with the inarticulacy of the justly modest. Only William Corlett, author of *Paper Lads,* managed a comment on his craft: 'Any script is due to a lot of people.'

Not very reassuring, but in some cases, I suppose, a useful get-out. Ray Jenkins, for instance, whose *The Bonus* was remade for Yorkshire's series of best-ever TV plays, *Do You Remember?*, might now care to slough off on to some pushy production assistant a few chunks of his script. If this is one of the finest representatives of what we're instructed to call 'the golden age of TV drama', then perhaps that old Sixties distinction between a television play and a real play ought to be revived. A bitch-bitch two-hander of middle-management marital stress, it had Keith Baxter and Judy Cornwell sardonically roaring out lines as if volume might make you forget sense. 'Good day?' inquired Baxter formally after a hard afternoon's philandering at the office; 'Aha!' yelled his painfully neglected wife, 'I nipped down to the Algarve in my latex bikini'; 'Sorry,' he said, sorrowfully. She gave him some glasses; he broke them; it was that sort of play. She was meant to be the predictable hausfrau; he the hustling company man in, I think, electrics; and this is how they talked. She: 'I can see our marriage, that old familiar jigsaw puzzle, spread out over the table for them to oozle over' (at least, I can't think what the word was if it wasn't 'oozle'). He, a few minutes later: 'In the crumbling Pompeii of our marriage, this might clear one layer of dust . . .' Hold on there; I mean – Pompeii? Isn't the point about Pompeii that it's really quite *well* preserved, with all that lava and stuff? Wouldn't you rather *want* your marriage to last as long as Pompeii?

Of course, such considerations were ludicrously arcane for Baxter, bellowing like a Mark Antony in Kilkenny rep, and Cornwell, effectively droopy-mouthed like a mean Queen Victoria: they probably just wanted to get their lines out and haul ass. It's doubly incongruous when television, our most naturalistic medium, so often produces dialogue this far from normal speech. 'I'm 1,000 wives,' Cornwell finally wailed, 'I'm a social problem.' Those still curious are referred to a helpful piece in the *TV Times* this week by Dr David Jackson who is, you might be surprised to learn, 'the TV Times doctor'. Did you know there was a TV Times doctor? Maybe he can fix plays as well.

If so, he should have bled off some of the surplus fluid from Yorkshire's other drama offering this week, Alun Owen's *The Look.* A sour-faced wine-waiter, totally silent throughout the play (some Equity ruling?), stares continually at a young wife in a restaurant, unnerves her, follows her around, and finally, despite the efforts of her rich in-laws, makes her crack. You could tell she was beginning to crack when she looked at the moon and said, 'Oh, cor, you don't half overstate your case, Moon.' Mind you, she may have been cracking earlier when she told her tycoon father-in-law, 'You can put that in your pipeline and pump it, Croesus.' And she was certainly cracking at the end when, with the waiter about to carry her off, she announced rhapsodically, 'You're like a red-hot needle coming too near my flesh. I cringe; but somewhere in my mind I know I want it to pierce me over and over again.' Who needs it?

But then everyone, not just scriptwriters, has been finding words tricky recently. Robert Morley, during the Pye Awards, invented a new character called Patty Newsreel; Peter Woods and the *News on Two* fellows a new profession, 'restauranteur'; Norman St-John Stevas a new game, 'noughts and crosswords' (though this may have been the fault of those *Cross Question* armchairs, ferocious slabs of velours breezeblock). None of these, though, equalled Brian Redhead's charming neologism on *Don't Quote Me* (BBC-2): the concept of *laissez-majesté.* The only man at ease with his tongue lately has been the disorientatingly skilled – and hammy – Meadowlark Lemon of *The Harlem Globetrotters* (BBC-1), who maintains a screech of hortatory prattle to his team-mates throughout the game: 'Hot dog, hot-dog . . . Take that cab around there . . . Hoory, HOORY . . . Talk to me over there, talk to me over theyARE . . . Time out . . . Time back in . . . Hey hey HEY . . . Hot dog, hot dog.' Not only that, but he shoots a mean basket as well.

Whereas finding the net (the one at the other end of the pitch from your own, that is) again proved difficult for the third best football team in the United Kingdom (*International Match of the Day* BBC-1). Whether or not the Scots will get to play in Argentina was ostensibly the subject of a sporadically interesting yet coarsely concocted *Panorama* (BBC-1). Some rich-boy gaucho bolased an ostrich, and David Taylor, reaching for that witty melange of word and picture which is what TV is all about, declared, 'In Argentina, it isn't the ostrich who buries his head in the sand, it's the people.' Even so, there were useful moments: an interview with General Videla, who talked bureaucrat-talk, and whose answers you knew would get nowhere because they all began with serpentine Spanish words like *consequentamente*; and a chilling clip of a typical supporter of his, a member of the Perkins family (immigrants from Warwickshire last century). The family, according to Taylor, 'believe in beautiful women and fast cars', and this particular member, smartly combining the two traits, was called Senora Mercedes Perkins. She stated, 'I know people who have disappeared – some of them are in Europe and some of them have disappeared.' You wondered what she thought about it all, until, after a slow second, a delightful society smile spread all over her face. Did the disappearances bother her? 'If I were the Government, I would do ten times worse to them.' Then she went back to whooping at a junior Perkins carrying off a rodeo prize.

Rock Music

Mark Kidel

No Danger

Queen *Wembley Empire Pool*

Dry ice – the trademark of most prestigious rock shows in the early part of the decade – is not quite passé enough to have earned the right to a revival, but it fits uneasily into the present angry, minimal and glitterless age. By using it prodigally in their Empire Pool concerts last week, Queen firmly identified themselves with an era that has passed, only to be kept alive in such concerts (as so many other cults and trends in show business) for a devoted mass of

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fans. Queen were able to fill Wembley three nights running – some indication of their staying-power as a blast from the past.

Queen have sold millions of albums all over the world and their singles have been equally successful, but on the evidence of their performance on Thursday it was difficult to see how they had secured such a vast following. With the exception of a few moments of genuine near-excitement, the entire set was, despite the souped-up drama, decibels and lighting effects, completely undistinguished. The band specialise in a genre of apocalyptic rock, 'pomp rock' as John Peel aptly called it, music to have great fantasies to, conjuring up the wild and thoroughly corny images of album-cover artists like Roger Dean. Queen are continuously building up thunderous Wagnerian climaxes, but they have the sexuality, excitement and consistency of whipped cream.

Freddie Mercury, the group's narcissistic lead-singer, struts around the stage in ballet pumps and tight black lurex trousers, held up rather precariously by a bizarre pair of braces tied over his shirtless and (no doubt for some) enticingly hairy top. He pouts and snarls like some junior Jagger – even the stage set at Wembley, with its elevated platforms on either side, looked uncomfortably as if it had been inspired by the Stones' own multi-level construction at Earls Court a couple of years ago.

But Mercury's menace, even more than his mentor's, is contrived, measured out to fulfil the wishes and fantasies of the audience. He is not, however, *really* dangerous. His name – presumably another show-biz pseudonym – combines the volatile deity of the gods' personal messenger, a mixture of speed and ethereal romanticism, with the boy-next-door cuddliness of 'Freddie'. He embodies a very saleable compromise, a hint of decadence wrapped in decency for the teenage readers of *Honey*. He gives a performance full of histrionics, laced with frantic and suggestive wiggles of the hips, and a carefully rehearsed use of his portable mike stand as a cross between a weapon and a wand. But there is no earthly chance of Freddie Mercury ever brandishing his *real* magic stick, as Jim Morrison so outrageously but courageously did at a concert in Miami. Behind the vaguely sexy pose, Mercury is much more like Engelbert Humperdinck than any of the genuine macho kings of rock.

For all the theatre, pyrotechnics and noise, Queen's music is a safe ersatz for the real thing; it masquerades as genuine heavy rock, but it has as much to do with boogie as John Denver, the Osmonds or Abba. It is reasonably well crafted, musically appealing but utterly predictable, and therefore accessible and acceptable to an audience who would shrink from the more unsettling gloom and darkness of a group like Led Zeppelin – let alone the edges of insanity visited by the likes of Lou Reed, Patti Smith and the more interesting musicians of the British new wave. The crowd at Wembley was excited enough to stand on the arena seats from start to finish, but it was an orderly freak-out, the wildest manifestation of which was probably the brandishing of a mascot, no doubt called Freddie.

Queen characterise the ultimately frightening tameness of so much rock, the safe consumer-orientated music against which so many kids have rebelled in the last two years. It is not likely to offend anyone, and the audience at Wembley was full of older people – Barbra Streisand fans by the looks of them. For all its display of apocalypse and anger, Queen's show allows the audience to return to comfortable semis and bedsits, titillated but basically unmoved. The spectacle at Wembley had been consumed, but in no way absorbed. All rock 'n'roll survives on the uneasy co-existence of creativity and greed. In Queen's case, it is sadly clear that the commercial imperative has obliterated just about everything else.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Easeful Death

Sentenced to Life *Westminster*
Eejits *Bush*
The Tempest *Riverside*

The Muggeridge first night was an occasion of some solemnity. Lord Longford was there, yellowish and moulting, his shirt hanging out behind him; and the celebrated author, all pink-and-white, lacquered and shining, like something you might expect to find decorating a child's birthday cake, was signing copies of his books for one of the earnest young men in trim suits who were cruising among the oldsters, like worker-ants in a field of dandelions gone to seed. His first play, which was produced in 1931, I fear I must have missed, not yet being alive at the time. But better late than never. *Sentenced to Life* is his second 'venture into the world of the theatre', as the programme coyly puts it; and though it was written in collaboration with one of Moral Rearmament's house dramatists, Alan Thornhill, Muggeridge was no doubt *primus inter pares* and had no doubt packed into it the wisdom he had accumulated in the 47 years between those far-flung premieres.

Alas, it isn't a wisdom that he very trenchantly relays to those sceptics and waverers who, if he means to do anything more than console the already-convinced, he must hope will throng to the Buckingham Palace Road to listen at his feet. Some have suggested that he is unfortunate in the coincidence that brings his play to town at the same time as Brian Clark's *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, which is also about the individual's 'right' to die. I disagree, for the obvious reason that the two hold absolutely opposite views on the subject. Here, surely, is an opportunity for a debate of interest to us all, and one in which Mr Clark is as vulnerable to Muggeridge's polemics as Muggeridge turns out to be to his. It was, after all, a little self-indulgent of Clark to make his vegetable-hero not only a gifted sculptor, and therefore uniquely reliant on active hands, but the wittiest and most articulate character in the play, and therefore uniquely appealing to the audience's sympathy. It was also a bit sneaky not to show us either his friends or his family, those who might be hurt when his life-support machine was finally switched off. The evidence in favour of euthanasia was by no means outrageously tilted, but it had its weak points.

Part of the problem, I suppose, is that Muggeridge is a less fluent and arresting dramatist than Clark, and far too inclined to editorialise through the mouth of a plonking fraulein, specially imported from Germany to be a sort of Mug's mug: 'Please excuse, but ze right to die will one day be ze right to kill.' The real trouble, though, is that he doesn't argue with his ethical enemies: he simply patronises them as trendies or phonies or both, too glib to know their own true feelings. His paraplegic lady-pianist has an abrupt change of heart just before expiring, the victim of the professor-husband she has browbeaten into poisoning her; and he, who has all along advocated mercy-killing in principle, is appalled by his act in anticipation and half-crazed by it in retrospect. You and I might call this simple loss of nerve, understandable under the circumstances. To Muggeridge it suddenly and inexplicably becomes a Christian rebirth, complete with evangelical jargon about crosses being carried and new men being put on, and ending with the inspirational cry, 'this day Thou shalt be with me in Oxford'. All very comforting for the Moral Rearmers, whose spiritual preconceptions and glum prejudices about contemporary liberalism the play painlessly re-emphasises; but not so helpful for those of us who had hoped for moral and spiritual analysis, and who can't regard rapturous telegrams from Sinai as firm proof of any ethical stance.

No need to ask which particular emerald isle gave birth to Ron Hutchinson, author of *Says I, Says He* and, now, of *Eejits*. 'An Irish queer is one who prefers the birds to the booze' . . . 'you're a dose of TB spit in search of a lung' . . . 'reality is an illusion, created by a lack of alcohol': the words pour promiscuously from the members of his *ceilidh* band, closeted in the attic of a tatty Kilburn pub, in a splurge of rhetoric that simultaneously delights and maddens him. His play lacks momentum and development, but that is because its object is a somewhat static one, to categorise and characterise the Irish in England. There are (it seems) those who know they will always be foreigners, those who are wholly assimilated, and the dissatisfied, dangerous ones in between, born-and-bred Londoners aggressively brandishing their inherited shamrocks in a doomed attempt to recover a long-lost identity. The blarney, the fibs, the nostalgia, the compulsive myth-making, the drinking, the combativeness, the sudden violence, the quickly-forgotten quarrels, the gallows humour, the music, and the shoddy alien environment: it is all there, and put across with punch and sly wit by Rio Fanning, Shay Gorman, Eric Richard and Michael Carter. We've heard and seen their like before, but not often analysed so thoroughly or with such considered ambivalence.

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The Riverside *Tempest* turns out to be Pip Simmons's 80-minute sprint through Shakespeare, with Miranda reduced to a snickering tart, Caliban a derelict old butler and Prospero a sneering, power-drunk Robinson Crusoe. Reconciliation, mercy, forgiveness and all those soft commodities promoted by the original are rejected for wrangling, bitterness and rage. The result, plumped into a sandpit and surrounded by driftwood, is visually as riveting as everything this group attempts; but emotionally shallow, and intellectually null.

Art

John Spurling

'Pseudo-Liberty'

Art for Society *Whitechapel*
Frank Auerbach *Hayward*
Jeffery Camp: Paintings of Night and Day *Serpentine*
Bryan Kneale: Work in Progress *Serpentine*
Bryan Kneale: Four Wall Sculptures from Vesalins *Redfern*

'Art for Whom?', asked the last exhibition at the Serpentine. 'Art for Society', says the current one at the Whitechapel. Four of the exhibitors are common to both, and Richard Cork, who organised and wrote much of the catalogue for the first, has helped select the second and written the longest essay for its catalogue. The two shows are Britain's reply to last year's 'Unofficial Art from the Soviet Union'. That brought together a heterogeneous group of artists united only in their desire to work independently of the narrow artistic dictates of their society; these are in revolt against what they see as the excessive independence of the artist in our society and anxious to make artists acceptable to an egalitarian society. Cork paints a pathetic picture of the effects of too much independence:

> the number of artists whose morale is destroyed by this pseudo-liberty is proportionally as great as the number of senior citizens who have no idea what to do with the endless stretches of free time they find confronting them when they stop working.

Modern art, he believes, has finally run its course into the sand (or among the Tate's bricks) and the only way out is for artists 'to stand up and be counted in favour of the right to play a definable part in the life of the community'. But in so far as modern art has not run into the sand, it is lining the pockets of dealers and catering for the tastes of a tiny minority of bourgeois elitists; therefore, 'art must be transformed into a progressive force for change in the future'.

Cork's rhetorical method is borrowed from Hitler. The trick is to put your finger on a generally accepted grievance (avant-garde art is sterile, the Sudeten Germans are being treated as second-class citizens), then make a flourish in the air and bring your fist down somewhere else altogether (art without mass appeal is sterile, the Sudeten Germans should be incorporated into Germany). But the action that might logically follow (art without mass appeal is banned, Czechoslovakia must be invaded) Cork dismisses with the pious hope that 'no government should pin art activity down too dogmatically' and a curious faith in the artist's 'independence from the system'.

Enough of this Cork talk. Art – with some, perhaps sterile, exceptions – is a thing you look at and the essential problem for the artist is not what to depict or for whom, but how. Artists have worked in the past for kings, priests, noblemen and bankers and they can just as well work for an egalitarian society. They may even – like Goya – have a political cause passionately at heart, but everything depends on their ability to express it visually. The fact that rhetoric, and especially Cork's rhetoric, dominates both these exhibitions makes one suspicious that they represent a movement less of artists than of art-critics.

Nothing shown in the Serpentine and very little in the Whitechapel allays this suspicion. Apart from some cheerful children's designs for a school mural in Islington, the Serpentine display was a visual washout. The Whitechapel – in which the 11 selectors have made an altogether more serious attempt to assemble evidence of contemporary British socio-political art – contains a few quirky surprises, such as Alison Williams's ceramic spider with the face of Enoch Powell and Linda Ayres's *pâpier maché* Miss Haversham, *Old Woman at Window*: but the general standard both of conception and execution is depressingly low, as if the artists thought it enough simply to have pitched on some approved topic – miners, for instance, or women's rights, or policemen and demonstrators. The violence in Northern Ireland elicits expressions of genuine feeling, humanitarian rather than political, from Jack Packenham and Joseph McWilliams, but otherwise it is the naïfs and photographers – those who interpose least between life and the image – who make the most impact in this company. Only Paul Butler, with his grey scenes of distorted, Dickensian figures in urban wastelands, gives much sign of being a likely artist for Cork's society as well as a good one.

Meanwhile the art-critical platform from which our hero essays his political lift-off – that individualistic art has no life left in it – is quietly demolished by three one-man shows: Frank Auerbach's retrospective at the Hayward and works by Jeffery Camp and Bryan Kneale which, not a moment too soon, replace 'Art for Whom?' at the Serpentine. Auerbach, squeezing out and stirring on his paint until it stands off the canvas like the dried sediment of a flood, is a belated Camden-Towner. His landscapes and interiors are little more than reconstructed Gores, Gilmans or Sickerts, but his heads and nudes have a strange, archaeological quality as if they had been brought to light by digging. One is made aware at the same time of the painter's process of composition by accretion and of the original subject's decomposition into the material of a work of art. Camp too is a figurative painter, using oddly-shaped canvasses or blocks of wood and a variety of devices (framing, foreshortening, marked contrasts between foreground and background) to convey open-air exhilaration. His active figures, are apt to be fey in a Chagallesque manner, but his sleeping nudes with ships passing in the distance and his dizzy chasms, with seagulls wheeling and Beachy Head lighthouse visible far below at a threatening angle, are powerful images of seaside sensuality.

Kneale, who has four wall-sculptures at the Redfern and four small pieces at the Academy in addition to his small retrospective at the Serpentine, works mainly in metal – brass, aluminium, steel and bronze. His sculptures have distinct associations – with machinery, armour, precision instruments and most recently the anatomy of the human body – though their structure is entirely imaginative. He is constantly inventing new forms, so much so that he often seems to leave a promising line of development only half-explored. His deft craftsmanship is an integral part of his art, the larger pieces seeming small because of their delicacy, the smaller ones large because of their packed strength. His classical simplicity, almost severity, is lightened by a sense of three-dimensional humour, an ability to spring a surprise or dance a little jig without disturbing the main idea. If a sculptor of Kneale's achievement and promise is not yet widely appreciated, that's not a failure of art but of art-criticism.

Films

John Coleman

Very Nervous

High Anxiety (A) *Prince Charles*
Les Enfants du Placard (AA) *Camden Plaza*

Scanning my notes on Mel Brooks's latest film, *High Anxiety*, I find myself at odds with my immediate impression of it in the cinema. This unexpected attack of critical dither had better have a cause. Here goes, anyway. The comedy, 'dedicated to the Master of Suspense, Alfred Hitchcock', seemed pretty feeble stuff, to put it mildly, a heavy let-down from the man who wrote, produced and directed such excellent larks as *The Producers*, *Blazing Saddles* and *Young Frankenstein* (not to mention *Silent Movie*, since I haven't seen it). Yet more than a quiverful of funny lines, and even situations, now stare at me from my pad. It would be temptingly easy to make it sound like a good, and anything but silent, movie. The story stars Mr Brooks himself as Dr Thorndyke, a Harvard professor and psychiatrist with a fear of heights, taking over as head of the Psycho-Neurotic Institute for the Very, *Very* Nervous in Los Angeles. Such Brooks stand-bys as Cloris Leachman (starchy Nurse Diesel, with huge boobs, a snarl, a hump and a moustache) and Madeline Kahn under a blonde, Hitchcockian wig are to hand and mouth: very much the latter. 'What's your sign?', asks Brooks, zodiacally inclined for reasons that

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need not concern an adult. Kahn: 'I'm sorry. It's unlisted.' After Brooks undergoes a shower sequence not a thousand cuts from that in *Psycho*, engaging an hysterical bellboy attacking him with a rolled newspaper: 'That kid gets no tip.' Brooks, who tends to be at the centre of the scrambled action, abruptly goes into a Sinatra-like rendition of the film's theme-song in a club, impressing the drawers off Miss Kahn, who feels he should turn professional. 'Oh, no,' he explains, 'the big bucks are in psychiatry.'

Enough, I hope, has been quoted to establish that I think Brooks a very funny writer. The trouble comes, rather, in the gap between the lines: it yawns, and this has to be Mr Brooks's fault. There is a suggestive parallel here. The best of Brooks's films have all starred Gene Wilder, that eldritch actor who has helped to redefine hysteria for several of us, his strange, special eyes rolling around scenes that leave him both defeated and defiant. His frazzled brand of frenzy was the perfect match for Brooks's inspired bad taste. One says 'was', because Wilder has gone on – and off – to becoming a writer-actor-director himself: and the loss to fun in the cinema has been notable. It seems likely that what is so badly adrift with *High Anxiety* stems from a similar misprision. Brooks is a more than useful comic bit-player, but in casting himself so firmly in the middle of his new movie it is as if he had cast himself to the winds. He probably had a good time, but that is just the danger. The cutting edge is absent merely because he is so present.

And yet – meet it is I set it down – those tablets of mine do record a few fine gags. Thunderous music suddenly fills a cab containing Dr Thorndyke and the driver. As they look at each other in mute surmise, presumably never having heard of soundtracks, a coach full of the LA Symphony Orchestra at full blast pulls up alongside. Thorndyke's vertigo (Hitchcock fans are going to be in for a disappointment at the paucity and febrility of the promised references) is finally cured via a childhood flashback as he races up a tower. 'It's not heights I'm afraid of,' he cries. 'It's parents!' But this is by a babbling Brooks: way below par.

Benoît Jacquot's *Les Enfants du Placard* – equivocally translated as 'Closet Children' (why not 'Cupboard Love'?) – is about an overpowering brother-sister relationship. Nicolas (Lou Castel) lives somewhere around his wits' ends, a dead-beat perennial student in a succession of Paris garrets, fiddling Métro tickets, cheating in cafés. His sister, Juliette (Brigitte Fossey), is married to a dicey, comfortably-off smuggler of African workers into France. Their father is in the same racket. Juliette does what she can to help Nicolas, even to the extent of finding a girl-friend for him. The names of Cocteau and Bresson have been invoked by various critics and, if you can imagine a hybrid offspring of their talents, Jacquot's quite compelling film might be it. My interest was rather aroused by the chilling, seedy detail of Nicolas's half-life, his grubby letting himself run to ruin during a long, hot summer. Elsewhere, the implausibilities strained what remains of my credulity.

Magazines

John Jones

A Realistic

If, unlikely thought, I was stopped by one of those market-research people and asked why I read *Gramophone*, I would reply, 'For peace of mind' – which would be my humdrum version of Taine's reason for going to listen to *Cosi* ten times in the one year 1866: 'The air is so soft that we only have to breathe it to be happy.'

Nobody tries to write cleverly in *Gramophone*. There is no striving for point. No spite or rivalry between contributors can be detected. When, in the correspondence column, a letter begins, 'I am writing because nobody else seems to be bothered to commend the idea of recording the Mozart operas in properly prepared editions' (June 1977), it comes like the baddy bursting into the well-ordered saloon-bar of an old Western. Indeed the Editor warns us that this is a voice from outside; he warns and reassures us by means of that italicised formula that must have almost disappeared from national journalism: *'The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed.'* That's peace of mind for you.

It's true that if you have a general fear of science you are wise to avert your gaze from the advertisements; some of the machines look very dangerous and they are all for sale. The words that go with the machines can be menacing too, in the classic pattern of the 'night starvation' hint that you may *think* you are sleeping soundly during those hours of oblivion. For example: 'Next time you play your favourite music, listen very carefully. You'll hear some very unpleasant sounds' – I pause in dismay. I *do* listen very carefully and I hear some very pleasant sounds – that's why I bought the records in the first place. 'Because, hidden inside every record there are microscopic dust particles. Like scouring powder they will grind into the grooves . . .'

But when *Gramophone* (*The Gramophone* then, of course) was born in 1923, there were no particles to frighten people. Technology was, on the contrary, reassuring, like a roll-call of prehistoric cars: 'The sound boxes for testing records are the HMV Exhibition No. 2, a Vocalion, a Realistic, an Ultone, a Superphone, a Sonat and a Three Muses.' And the records reviewed included Busoni playing Chopin, Paderewski playing Liszt, and Kreisler and Zimbalist in the Bach double concerto with only the support of an unnamed string quartet.

Compton Mackenzie, editor for many years, promised in the launching number 'an organ of candid opinion'; but he added that 'the errors we make will be mostly on the side of kindness'. Even so, there was some heavy pounding in that first number by the standards of today. Busoni was said to be possessed of 'a cynical intellect' which barely 'deigns to communicate with us'. It is conceded that Paderewski makes a nice noise now, but his earlier records sounded 'like an orchestra of banjos'. There is a piece called 'Good Singing' by F. Sharp (yes, really) in which he attacks the *bel canto* shortcomings of English singers; under stress, the average English voice 'bolts down the throat like a rabbit into its burrow'.

In 1924 the visionary *Gramophone* could imagine a day when recordings of complete works would be quite widely commercial. A correspondent remarks: 'I venture to predict a great sale for a complete volume of *Messiah* if your suggestion bears fruit.' Another wise man, fresh from Beecham's recording of Beethoven Six, urged the industry to let him loose on the Haydn and Mozart symphonies (to such effect, in the long run, that we lost Beecham through deletion as a conductor of Six, and also his Four and Eight which were about as good).

At that time, and for many years to come, high and low and no brow muddled along together happily. *Non mi dir* was announced alongside *Honey Boy Across the Sea*, and that matchless Thibaud/Casals/Cortot recording of the Brahms double concerto appeared in the same HMV Christmas list as '"The Safe (a Thriller)" performed by Angela Baddeley and Company'. Buy this Brahms album, writes the reviewer in the 1929 spirit of P. G. Wodehouse, 'even if mortgages have to go up on the dear old home'.

Costing sixpence in 1923, *Gramophone* (which is 40p at this moment) had only inflated to a shilling in the early Fifties. But the rise in circulation was spectacular, from 42,000 to 57,000 in the single year 1953-4 – an increase equal to its entire circulation at the end of World War II. No doubt the two great convulsions of this period, the arrival of LPs and then of stereo, created magazine sales; certainly both were accompanied by massive record deletions. And now, in the middle Seventies, we are witnessing a recovery operation and acquiring new pleasure in dirty old recordings: we dote on Casals's vomity groans ahead of the beat, on Furtwangler's phrases mouthed into the microphone, on the feats of the Busch brothers heard through thin sleet. Moreover the re-issues are often cheap. We can hear Lemnitz and Rosewaenge singing Pamina and Tamino for less than it would cost to get to Glyndebourne, let alone get in. Indeed we can go right back to Paderewski's banjo orchestra and his (loathsome to me) rubato and illicit broken chords.

It is one of my points of rapport with *Gramophone* that they have encouraged this revival. After all, they have everything to gain by editorial back-up of those dozens of pages of electronic adverts. I'm told – I wouldn't know – that their coverage of technical matters is very competent. I only know it isn't oppressive. And what I do know about, I usually approve. Their reviewers are a strong team, and some of them very influential. Think, for example, of Edward Greenfield, who is also an editor of the Penguin Guide. He must 'sell' a lot of records. So must those who have a second life as writers in non-specialist papers. Then there are the long stayers like Lionel Salter who has lent distinction to *Gramophone* for nearly 30 years.

I was going to say that their reviews are

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unprejudiced, which is absurd. I really mean that their prejudices are not overstressed and – peace of mind again – I share most of them. They tend to dislike American orchestras. They don't extend unlimited patience to the extremes of 'authenticity', like Mozart on square pianos and Beethoven on early Broadwoods. They have their reservations about some very big names. Not much is said, but I suspect there are some in *Gramophone*'s office who smile as I do when they recall Beecham's reply to the young man who asked him if he had yet heard Karajan: 'Ah – my boy – ah – he's – ah – he's a musical Malcolm Sargent.'

Weekend Competition

No 2516 **Set by Spiro Keats**

I have been lethargically musing about a rhyming-slang comp for some time now. It isn't easy . . . 'That's a nice pair of *jekylls* you're wearing' (trousers, via strides, via Jekyll and Hydes). 'That was a corking *richard* I saw you with the other evening' (girl, via bird, via Richard III). More, if you don't mind: the idea is that the slang word should be at *two removes* from the original and yet readily identifiable in context. A tricky one. Try *very hard*, is all. By 9 June.

Result of No 2513 **Set by Dan Drough**

Another in our series of poetical updatings: we wanted well-known passages of Donne in the style of Betjeman.

Report **by Little Keith**

An attractive comp idea, a justly enthusiastic entry. Some of you had difficulty translating the knotty (and deeply self-conscious) sensuality of Donne into the bashful cuddlesomeness of the Laureate, but God and Death supplied handholds. Well done there, Mr Hope, for realising that Donne and Dunn (Joan Hunter) are, of course, related. £6 apiece.

Death, Don't be Boring

Death you are a dreadful fellow,
Death you are frightful bore.
While you lurk I'll stay mellow,
Dreaming what you have in store.
You may think you're proud and mighty,
For me you'll be a welcome snooze.
Beyond you stands eternal Blighty,
Schoolgirls I can never lose.
I am coming home Miranda,
To silver birches and the moon,
To lounge upon a warm verandah:
Death, be a chum and make it soon.

ROY KELLY

Busy Old Fool

Oh, *do* buzz off, you bumptious Sun:
The night, it seems, has scarce begun
Before its blissful course is run . . .
Now, after brekker,
I snatch my brolly from the stand
And flee our nest so fondly planned
Out here in smiling Metroland –
A daily trekker
To eight hours clerking at the 'Pru',
Ten hours in all bereft of you,
My darling girl! I hurry through
Those *grinding* hours
Till sunset brings the crowded train
That speeds me home to my Elaine,
To supper, Horlicks – bed again
And love that flowers . . .

IAN KELSO

Hello There

When we played in the nursery till seven
Drank cocoa, and fought, and cried 'Pax',
Did we dream of this amorous heaven –
You in Arpege, and me in my Daks?
The world jets about in a hurry,
While pundits and media-men fuss.
Our concorde's a bedroom in Surrey:
Very Sanderson, very us.
So pass the Rice Krispies, my honey,
And let's listen in to *Today*,
For our love is as solid as money
And sound as this egg on my tray.

BRIAN S. SALOME

Death Again

O John 'Doctor' Donne, O John 'Doctor' Donne,
The dance so soon over, the race nearly run;
In life's fearful twilight when Death lays his hand,
You smile at the hourglass wherein falls the sand.
Can you be such a dreamer you fear not life's end?
It is true that you look upon Death as a friend?
Are you right to insist your demise might be fun? –
Or is it mere sophistry, John 'Doctor' Donne?

T. HOPE

And Again

Fate on the left hand, and Death on the right,
And me in the middle to get through the night,
A bottle of whisky, a handful of pills,
What a simple solution to most of my ills.
Death on a tandem without any brakes,
Death in a tea-shop without any cakes,
Death as a joke with the punch-line forgot,
As a film without end, a suburban gavotte.
Where's your sting, little death?
Where's your pride? Where's your power?
I'll wake up by and by
And play squash for an hour.

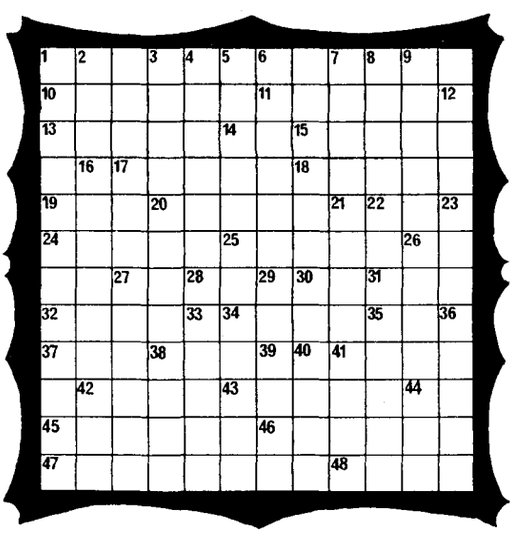
HUMPHREY EVANS

Chess

This week's chess column has been unavoidably delayed in flight from Las Palmas. We hope it will have landed by next week. Apologies. **T.M.**

Salamanca 6: 'Self-Portrait'

PRIZES. Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 6, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 6 June.



Each 'life-li(n)e' contains a definition (one word or more) and a hidden letter-mixture of the answer, sometimes overlapping, either coming first. Bars are not required as lengths are given and the answers are symmetrical. To give a more accurate picture, whenever certain letters occur solvers are asked to replace them by their notations as follows:
O, and L ■ : K ◪ : X ▢ : Y ▢ : P ▢ : C ▢.
(Thus a supposed answer YORKS would appear in the diagram as ▢■■R◪S▢.)

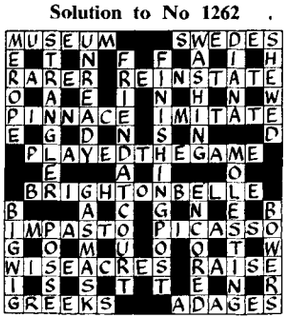
ACROSS

1. Firm command of Italian etc. (4)
5. Agents among father's relatives (7)
10. Record collection still enormous (6)
11. Likes strong-looking black tea (6)
13. Relaxes a week in sun twice yearly (7)
16. University ex-President (5)
18. Owns dummy lexicon of wood (5)
19. Easy of speech (3)
20. To speak re Arts with spirit (5)
22. Has keen perception, free, youngish (3)
24. Of upright wideawake appearance (5)
25. The sad expression relaxed (5)
27. Loves to buy cactus plants (5)
30. Is a teller of yarns (5)
32. Spring of his ideas – poetry (3)
33. Not biographically a shabby person (5)
35. Have to thank language, words etc. (3)
37. Educated in NYC, London, Oxbridge (5)
39. Sows self-styled humour (5)
43. To think with sensible even-minded logic (7)
45. No randomness can be found down under the casualness (6)
46. A compassionate 'poet' (6)
47. Dexterous at setting, as this is witness (7)
48. Confident he can care for needs of solvers (4)

DOWN

1. Continually strives to confuse dogmatists (5)
2. Can't put up with stubborn individuals (3)
3. Not exactly one of bad temper (4)
4. Bogged down by box-files (4)
6. Used to be prickly about changes sometimes (5)
7. A friendly one, by all accounts (4)
8. Lured by old television plays (6)
9. Lived near Chiltern region (3)
12. Edited school magazine (3)
14. Loves cricket – Yorks. supporter (4)
15. Roots for this exact thing (4)
16. Father apparently Greek (4)
17. Likes whiskey raw (3)
20. By behaviour an odd sort of fish (4)
21. Can frustrate any debate (4)
23. Honestly likes being (3)...
24. . . . 'old' Salamanca (when public notices!) (3)
26. Paints spinneys, woods, trees (4)
27. Wholly outrageous liking for milk-based food (6)
28. Hip, but with orthodox academic approach (4)...
29. . . . that may better endure (4)
31. Has a great deal to say (3)
34. Never shows what's hatching in neat cortex to observers (5)
36. Has correct, sharpened manners (5)
37. Does not curse in a big way (3)
38. Can undo every knot (4)
40. He's elegant, besides (4)
41. Velvet slippers please him (4)
42. Notable in his club (3)
44. Main avocation's in the forefront (3)

Solution to No 1262



Prizewinners to No 1262

Vera Johnson (BC, Canada)
P. A. Prentice (Guildford)
Mrs V. Hutchinson (Tunbridge Wells)

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APPOINTMENTS

Islington Housing

Advisory Officer Ref: 146

Career Grade AP3/4 (£3,852 to £4,657 inclusive)

The successful applicant will join a team of officers providing a centralised advisory service to members of the public in relation to the Council's policy on Housing and the facilities available. Duties will include interviewing and processing enquiries taking the necessary follow-up action.

Housing Assistant Ref: 200

Grade AP3 (£3,852 to £4,230 inclusive)

This vacancy is in the Department's Lettings Division and the successful applicant will be responsible for the selection of suitable transfer cases according to the Council's transfers policy. Duties will include interviewing, dealing with correspondence and answering telephone enquiries on related transfer matters, and maintaining the various registers held within the Division.

Resident Warden Ref: 95

Grade AP2 (£3,439 to £3,780 inclusive) less Emoluments

We are looking for a Resident Warden to be responsible for the well being of elderly tenants in sheltered accommodation at Peregrine House, EC1. An emolument charge of £324 (under review) in respect of rent, rates and water rate is deducted from the salary quoted above. Applicants should preferably be experienced in this type of work or have a genuine desire to assist elderly people.

339). Please quote reference number. Closing date 16 June 1978. Application form and further details available from the Staff Section, 292 Essex Road, London N1 3AZ (Tel: 01-226 3300 Ext.

Our jobs are open to all races and both sexes.

The Industrial Society

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The Industrial Society is an independent body concerned with promoting the fullest involvement of people in their work. The Society is governed by a council which consists of leading figures from the employment world, including national and senior trade union officials.

Applications are invited for the position of

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In salary scale £4,659 — £5,508

The Trade Union Development Unit is concerned with maintaining the Society links with officials and representatives within trade unions and for providing advice which will enable both officials and representatives to perform their duties effectively.

The Unit consists exclusively of active trade unionists who, before joining the Society, held office within the movement as a full-time official or employee representative.

Applications are invited from men and women with at least five years' experience in a position of responsibility within a trade union at shop floor or full-time official level.

Applications giving details of previous experience, quoting reference A237, to Pauline Markwell, Personnel Officer, The Industrial Society, PO Box IBQ, 48 Bryanston Square, London, W1H 1BQ.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adult Literacy Support Services Fund.

The Fund is a non-profit making organisation financed by charitable contributions, staffed by a General Manager and 7 assistants, and based in West London. Set up in 1976 to support Adult Literacy work throughout the U.K., it has been closely associated with the Adult Literacy Resource Agency and the BBC's Further Education Departments, and it has links with related operations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

At present the Fund runs postal and telephone referral services which put would-be literacy students and volunteer tutors in touch with the relevant LEA officer; promotes tutor training activities connected with the use of broadcasting; fosters research into aspects of book design and typography; and commissions and publishes resource material.

As its work develops, the Fund plans to co-operate more extensively with the mass media - newspapers, magazines, and all forms of broadcasting at national and local level - and will support media activities aimed at improving not only reading and writing skills but also other basic skills such as the ability to comprehend and use numbers and to communicate in English.

The Chief Executive will be managerially accountable to the part-time Board of Directors for the working of the Fund, for the development and extension of the Fund's work and for the conduct of fund raising activities. The successful applicant for this new post is likely to have extensive experience of adult education, gained either as a tutor or administrator or through related work in the mass media. Applicants should have administrative abilities as well as the entrepreneurial and imaginative qualities that will enable the Fund to continue making fresh contributions to adult education in the U.K.

A salary of about £8,000 p.a. is being offered on a contract for two years in the first instance.

Applicants should write, including curriculum vitae, by 12th June 1978 to:-

The Secretary, Adult Literacy Support Services Fund, P.O. Box 7, London W3 6XJ.

UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Applications are invited for THREE LECTURESHIPS in the Department of Economics.

ECONOMIC HISTORY (2 posts)

Preference will be given to candidates with research interests in the Economic History of Modern Europe, particularly Russia, and Modern Britain.

QUANTITATIVE ECONOMICS (1 post)

Candidates will be persons interested in devoting most of their time to teaching, research within the areas of econometrics, statistics and other mathematical methods in their application to economic problems. Their honours degree will typically be in Economics with substantial specialisation in statistics and/or econometrics OR in Statistics followed by further study or research in an economic application. Some experience in teaching quantitative methods to economic undergraduates would be an advantage. The post will ultimately involve teaching at all levels in the quantitative field.

The Department shares joint major degree courses, inter alia, with the Mathematics Department, which has a statistical section, with Operational Research and with Accounting and Finance. The University has adequate Computing facilities. All members of the Economics Department are normally expected to be willing to teach economics classes at first-year level.

Further particulars may be obtained (quoting reference L44/E) from the Establishment Officer, University House, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YW to whom applications (5 copies), naming three referees, should be sent not later than 15 JUNE 1978.

Please state which post you are applying for.

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LWT

LONDON WEEKEND TELEVISION'S
Current Affairs Department is looking for
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Write stating which programme you would like to work on, describing your qualifications and reasons for applying

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For the above positions apply to:

Mrs Joan Pugh,
Staff Officer,
London Weekend Television,
Kent House,
Upper Ground,
London SE1.

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A vacancy has arisen in our Headquarters near St. Paul's for a Technical Translator, who will work as part of a team whose job is to make and edit English translations of scientific and technical papers, reports, correspondence and other documents of interest to the Board.

Applicants, male or female, should be experienced translators with a scientific or engineering background and English as their mother tongue, and they must be able to produce good English translations of RUSSIAN technical documents. In addition they should have a working knowledge of at least one language other than Russian, preferably German or French.

Applications stating full relevant details and present salary to the Group Personnel Officer, C.E.G.B., Sudbury House, 15 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AU, by **2 June 1978.**
Quote Ref. **NS/165.**

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY GENERATING BOARD

COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

Equal Opportunities Division: Housing and Employment Investigations sections.

Manchester & Birmingham

Two vacancies exist for Senior Executive Officers to specialise respectively in Employment Investigations and Housing in the Equal Opportunities Division of the Commission for Racial Equality's Regional Office in Manchester.

The jobs will combine investigation and law enforcement with educational and advisory work. The starting salary, which is currently under revision, will be £4,900 rising to £5,900. Supplements of £313.20 per annum and £208.80 per annum are also payable.

A vacancy also exists for a Higher Executive Officer to specialise in Housing in the CRE's Regional Office in Birmingham. This Officer will work under the Senior Executive Officer in the Housing Section in Birmingham, whose duties are as described in the above Manchester Post. The starting salary is £3,900 a year, rising to £4,700, plus supplements as detailed above.

Please send a large self-addressed envelope for an application form and further particulars to the Personnel Department, Commission for Racial Equality, Elliot House, 10-12 Allington St, London SW1E 5EH. Completed applications should be returned not later than 16 June 1978.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

We have a vacancy for an editorial assistant to be responsible primarily for writing material for two monthly journals dealing with Palestinian, Arab and Third World affairs. Our clients include various Arab governments, and occasional projects include government year books, tourist guides, films, etc.

Applicants should have an appreciation of Arab affairs, and be able to type and work under pressure. Knowledge of the Middle East an asset though not necessary. Successful candidate could commence work from early June, and will enjoy some opportunities to travel overseas.

Applicants should apply in writing giving full CV, samples of published writings if possible, and salary required, to: **The Managing Director, The Main Event Limited, 23 Linton House, 11 Holland Park Avenue, London W11.**

ECONOMIST

YOUTHAID is undertaking a 2-year research programme into the relationship between capital investment and technology and employment growth and decline, by both numbers and type, in several sectors of the economy.

Applications are invited from qualified economists, who possess a firm understanding of economic theory, preferably a working knowledge of industry and the ability to analyse data. Salary in the region of £5,000 p.a.

Please apply in writing with a detailed c.v. to:

The Director, Youthaid, 57 Chalton Street, London NW1 1HY.

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FREELANCE SUB-EDITORS. If you're an accurate sub-editor, working on an hourly basis, then we'd like to hear from you. Write with a brief description of your publishing experience to Box 1600.

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT for trade union, good typing with audio or shorthand and ability to organise filing system, to work primarily with a regional organiser with assistance to one of the union's branches in same building. Commencing £3,124 plus, increases after 1 & 2 years' service. Review in January. Hours 9.30-5 or 10-5.30, no Saturdays, 4 weeks' holiday (pro rata in first year). Maternity and paternity leave, sick pay plus interest-free season ticket loan. Apply to Administrative Officer, National Union of Journalists, 314 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

SECRETARY/SHORTHAND TYPIST required. Interesting post for efficient and enterprising person. Good working conditions. Salary commences at £3,124 p.a. rising by annual increments, plus LVs. 32½-hour week. Details of self and experience to National Union of Journalists, 314 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

SMALL CONFERENCE/retreat centre on edge of Blackheath urgently requires Resident Bookings Secretary/Domestic Administrator until December with possible permanency. Apply: Diana Eeles, Dartmouth House, Dartmouth Row, SE10. Tel. 01-692 3620.

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IBA Officer

For Wales And West Of England

Lyn Evans, the Authority's Officer for Wales and the West of England, is due to retire next year. The Authority invites applications from those (men and women) who are interested in filling the vacancy which will then arise.

The Officer for Wales and the West of England has an office and supporting staff in Cardiff and is responsible for the Authority's relations with the television and radio programme companies in Wales and the West of England and for reviewing the programme output and other activities of those companies in relation to the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act. A Regional Executive based in Bristol, reports to this Officer. The post also carries important public relations and representational activities, involving the fostering of good relations with local Members of Parliament, local authorities, the local press, educational agencies, other bodies of opinion, and with the public generally. The Officer and the staff of the Cardiff office are responsible for servicing the Authority's Welsh Committee (whose Chairman is the IBA Member for Wales) and the Swansea Local Radio Advisory Committee.

The successful applicant should have held posts at a senior level where mature judgement and the ability to work without immediate direction have been demonstrated. A keen interest in broadcasting and an understanding of its place and influence in the community are essential for all posts of this kind with the Authority. In regard to the present post, the Officer should also have a wide and intimate knowledge of the social, political and cultural life of Wales. Since the duties include public speaking and writing articles and reports, the capacity of clear expression both in speech and in writing (in both English and Welsh) is also an important qualification.

The salary of the post will be above £8,500 and the starting point will depend upon the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate. As the post involves much travelling in Wales and the West of England a car is provided.

The presentation of applications is left to those interested in the post and no form will be issued. Applications should contain all the information which will enable the Authority to assess candidates' experience, qualifications and potential for a post which is among the most influential in the communications field in the areas which it covers.

The post is being advertised well in advance. It is contemplated that the selection process will be completed in time for the successful applicant to take up employment with the Authority at the end of the year or early in 1979, thus allowing for an overlap period with the present holder.

IBA INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

The closing date for the receipt of application is 30th June 1978.
Please write quoting reference number NBS/99 to The Deputy Director General, Independent Broadcasting Authority, 70 Brompton Road, London, SW3 1EY.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH is looking for an energetic and experienced administrator who will respond enthusiastically to the administrative and financial challenges *created by our growing campaigning* strength. The person appointed will be responsible for co-ordinating effective communication between the campaigning, trading, finance, administrative and research elements of FOE. We are looking for someone who recognises the difference between organisation and bureaucracy. Previous administrative experience and a *commitment to the aims of the environment* movement. Low salary and limitless opportunity. Apply in writing by 5 June enclosing C.V. to Tom Burke, FOE, 9 Poland Street, London W1.

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TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp. Fenwick's). 493 3005.

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Financial

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Publications

WANTED! BOOKWORMS & DISCWORMS. Our edition of 9 June will contain a 'Bookworm'/'Discworm' column. Any books, publications, periodicals or records you want can be advertised for 50 pence a line (av. 6 words per line, min. 2 lines. Box No. 50p). Please send remittance with order to: Bookworm/Discworm, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1.

SOCIALIST COMMUNITY. Journal of *Young European Left. Copies of issue* Number 2 available at 25p each (P.O. or cheque payable to Young European Left) from Peter Ebsworth, 332 Norwood Road, West Norwood, London SE27 9AF.

LITERARY MONTHLY. 'On Evelyn Waugh' 33p. 44 Sillwood Road, Brighton.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & Catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

NEW STATESMAN 1960s to early 1970s available. What offers? Box 1616.

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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

METCALFE STUDENTSHIP FOR WOMEN

Applications are invited for the METCALFE STUDENTSHIP FOR WOMEN, which is of the value of not less than £120 and not more than £500 in the case of a full-time student and not less than £60 in the case of a part-time student, tenable for one year in the first instance. Candidates must be graduates of a University of the United Kingdom and must be prepared to undertake research at the London School of Economics on some social, economic or industrial problem to be approved by the University. Applicants who do not know the result of their Degree Examinations may make provisional application.

Applications, on a prescribed form, must reach the Secretary to the Scholarship Committee, University of London, Senate House, London WC1E 7HU (from whom further particulars may be obtained) not later than 1 November 1978.

Fellowship

GREATER LONDON ARTS ASSOCIATION

C Day Lewis Fellowship for Writers

Applications are invited for 4 C Day Lewis Fellowships for writers in London Comprehensive schools. The Fellowships are sponsored jointly by the Greater London Arts Association and the schools and education authorities concerned. They are open to all published creative writers resident in the UK.

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Letters of application, including details of publications and relevant experience, should be sent to:

The Literature Officer, Greater London Arts Association, 25/31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SF

not later than 23 June.

Further details are available on request

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ROME. Historic centre, flat, 3 rooms, bath, kitchen, to let June 15-Sept 15. £170 p.m. B. Petith, Via Di Pietra 87, Tel. Rome 679-62-67.

OVERLAND: Safari to Johannesburg, 18 September. Complete details from GAA, 233 Station Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. Tel.: (0702) 73122.

MAGIC BUS. Amsterdam £10, Paris £10.50, Athens £26, Barcelona £27, Copenhagen £28, Lisbon £35.50, Morocco £47. 74 Shaftesbury Ave, W1. 439 0729, 439 0557.

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. Opening perfs 'Coriolanus'. Red price prevs Wed, Thurs. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse and at the Piccadilly Theatre in Peter Nichols' 'Privates On Parade'.

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Newmarch Lectures in Economic Statistics by Professor A. S. Goldberger, 'Heredity, Environment and Socioeconomic Achievement'. Tuesday and Wednesday, 6 and 7 June at 5.30. Admission free, without ticket.

VOLTAIRE: BI-CENTENARY MEETING. Speakers: James Hemming: 'The Living Spirit of Voltaire', Barbara Smoker: 'Voltaire Verbatim', Nicolas Walter: 'Voltaire in his Time'. Peter Cadogan in the chair. Tuesday 30 May, 7.30 p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

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